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ABSTRACT

A project was undertaken to design an information dissemination newsletter to meet the professional development needs of Pennsylvania's adult basic and literacy education (ABLE) practitioners. It was decided that an 8- to 10-page-long newsletter would be produced for 5 months that included information/articles from as many sources as could be identified and featured an inviting format. An editorial board of experienced adult educators was assembled to serve as resource persons to the editor, and a comprehensive, up-to-date mailing list of the more than 4,000 ABLE educators in Pennsylvania was compiled. The newsletter's contents and format were based on responses to surveys of adult educators in Pennsylvania, input from the newsletter's editorial board, and comments/suggestions submitted by readers. Five issues of the newsletter, "What's the Buzz?," were published. Each issue contained feature articles, summaries of the contents of various professional newsletters of interest to adult educators, news briefs on people and programs, and dates of upcoming events. Among the topics discussed in the feature articles were the following: techniques for motivating students; service coordination and accountability; adult literacy on the Internet; adult literacy and welfare reform; and work force development. (Attached are the newsletter's five issues.) (MN)

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ED 405 515

FINAL REPORT

"What's the Buzz?"
Pennsylvania's Adult Basic and Literacy Education
Professional Development Newsletter

Submitted by:

David W. Fluke, Project Director
Adult Education Linkage Services
Box 214, Troy, PA 16947

Project # 99-6002

1995-1996

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TITLE PAGE

"What's the Buzz?"--Pennsylvania's Adult Basic and Literacy Education Professional Development Newsletter.

David W. Fluke, Project Director and Editor. Adult Education Linkage Services, PO Box 214, Troy, PA 16947. (717) 596-3474

1995-1996

Amount of Grant: $39,687

Project # 99-6002

Disclaimer: The activity which is the subject of this report was supported in part by the U.S. Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position nor policy of the U.S. Department of Education or the Pennsylvania Department of Education, and no official endorsement by these agencies should be inferred.

Adult Education Linkage Services is a community-based, non-profit organization which provides technical services and support to adult education programs.

Adult Education Linkage Services is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Submitted July 20, 1996

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FINAL REPORT
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ABSTRACT PAGE

Title: "What's the Buzz?"--Pennsylvania's Adult Basic and Literacy Education Professional Development Newsletter.

Project #: 99-6002 Funding: $39,687

Project Director: David W. Fluke Phone No. (717) 596-3474

Contact Person: David W. Fluke

Purpose: This project was designed to provide an information dissemination newsletter to meet the professional development needs of adult basic and literacy education practitioners in Pennsylvania.

Procedures: The project prepared and disseminated an 8-10 page newsletter for 5 months (September and November, 1995 and January, March and May, 1996). The newsletter included information from a variety of sources including research literature, the Pennsylvania Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, professional organizations, governmental entities, conferences, workshops and practitioners of adult education. The newsletter was mailed to 4,200 adult educators in Pennsylvania and 200 persons in other states.

Summary of Findings: The adult education newsletter in general and "What's the Buzz?" in particular, is a viable vehicle for the widespread dissemination of professional development information. The cost effectiveness and impact on adult educators make it the most cost effective dissemination instrument available in adult education on a statewide and regional basis.

Comments: This newsletter was extremely effective in dissemination important professional development information to large numbers of adult educators in Pennsylvania.

Products: 5 copies of an 8-10 page newsletter.

Descriptors:

Introduction

The increased availability of professional development information and the increased emphasis upon the importance of this information to the improvement of quality of adult education services have produced a need for viable, cost-effective dissemination techniques and instruments.

In a state such as Pennsylvania with a large rural population, many small programs find dissemination of professional development information by workshops and conferences are not effective due to the parttime nature of adult educators, travel distances and small budgets.

Our newsletter helps fill this need for effective information dissemination by providing our readers with up-to-date informative, useful knowledge which is relevant and appropriate to adult basic and literacy education instructors, tutors, counselors and administrators. We are proud to say "What's the Buzz?" is regarded very highly by our readers in Pennsylvania and produces a feeling of "belonging" among adult educators while keeping them abreast of the latest in professional development information.

Because of budget restrictions our recruitment of new readers was inhibited this year although we still maintain a mailing list of more than 4,200 adult educators in Pennsylvania who receive the publication. This is a 1,000% increase in readers from when we initiated the newsletter 15 years ago.

The newsletter is prepared and edited by David W. Fluke and Juliet B. Fluke with final graphics and editing by Tana Reiff.

Contents of the newsletter are designed to meet the professional development needs of adult educators in Pennsylvania and copies of all issues of "What's the Buzz?" are available on loan from the state adult literacy resource center, AdvancE, 333 Market Street, 11th floor, Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333.

Activities were conducted from July 1, 1995 through June 30, 1996 with newsletters mailed every other month beginning in September, 1995.

Body of the Report

Statement of the Problem: To meet the professional development needs of adult educators in Pennsylvania in an up-to-date, cost efficient manner.

Goals and Objectives:

1. To prepare an 8-10 page general newsletter containing information relevant and pertinent to adult basic and literacy education practitioners in Pennsylvania.
2. To include as newsletter contents information and articles from as many sources as can be identified.
3. To prepare the newsletter in a format which encourages recipients to read the articles contained in the newsletter.
4. To assemble an Editorial Board of experienced adult educators to serve as resource persons to the editor.
5. To maintain a comprehensive up-to-date mailing list of 4,000+ adult basic and literacy educators in Pennsylvania.
6. To mail copies of the newsletter to persons on the mailing list such mailing to occur every other month beginning September, 1995 and concluding May, 1996.

Administration

Overall, including fiscal, administration of the project is through the offices of Adult Education Linkage Services, PO Box 214, Troy, PA 16947. Project administration is the responsibility of the project director/editor who has administrative and oversight responsibilities for all phases of the preparation, publishing and dissemination of the newsletter.

Procedures

Procedures employed to study or explore the problem included surveys of adult educators in Pennsylvania, input from members of the editorial board and a compilation of comments and suggestions submitted by readers.

Objectives Met

All objectives were met by the project. Adult educators receiving the publication indicate they read the newsletter and the contents meet their professional development needs.

Objectives Not Met (Negative Results)

Although all objectives were met, budgetary restrictions seriously inhibited the effectiveness of the newsletter by restricting the number of issues and pages. This resulted in many important information and professional development items being omitted from the newsletter or being not timely due to the bi-monthly distribution schedule. In addition, budgetary restrictions prohibited us from actively recruiting new readers.

Evaluation

In addition to a compilation of comments from readers, a survey form was included with copies of the March, 1996 issue. A third party received the forms and prepared a report of the evaluation results, a synopsis of which appears below (the entire report appears in the Addenda to this report).

Evaluation Results: Responses on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest)

How does this year's format compare to last year's?

5-38% 4-43% 3-14% 2-29% 1-0

How does this year's publication of 5 issues compare to last year's publication of 10 issues?

5-33% 4-17% 3-17% 2-29% 1-0

How does this year's number of pages per issue (8-10) compare with last year's (12-14)?

5-33% 4-33% 3-24% 2-0 1-10%

How useful are the articles we run in The Buzz?

5-40% 4-48% 3-0 2-8% 1-4%

How important is The Buzz to your professional development as an adult educator?

5-48% 4-30% 3-12% 2-12% 1-0

Do you read every issue of The Buzz?

Yes-86% No-14%

Do you read every article in The Buzz?

Yes-38% No-62%

Types of Articles You Find Most Interesting in The Buzz?

* Articles on ways to improve learning of adults.
* Articles on instructional strategies.
* Articles on new programs to assist adult learners.

* New publications in literacy and technology.

* Ideas from providers of AE programs across the state.

* Innovative programs that can be shared to improve services.

* Program outcomes; programs which have met their goals and have been evaluated.

* Retention rates.

* Reviews of materials and articles on new teaching techniques most helpful. We also rely on The Buzz for information on upcoming events.

* Updates on conferences anywhere in the state.

* Introduction of what to expect in the next issue.

* Success stories from different centers.

Comments

"I would like to see reviews of available software for adult education and ESL."

"You are all doing a fine job, and I hope you will continue this work for many years to come."

"The Buzz just gets better and better! Keep at it. It's a great service to the field."

" New format is too busy and cluttered. Liked the old one better."

"It helps me and other people I talk to. Keep up the good work."

" I read 'What's the Buzz?" from cover to cover. I find it extremely interesting and informative. Also, I get the feeling that I am in touch with what is going on in other parts of the Commonwealth, that I am part of the mainstream of literacy programs and that I am aware of current trends in the field of adult education."

Dissemination of This Report

This report including copies of each issue of the newsletter, is being sent to the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education (333 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333)for dissemination as they wish.

Conclusions

"What's the Buzz?" is a cost-effective method of disseminating adult education professional development information. It is relied upon by adult basic and literacy education practitioners in Pennsylvania to provide information which can be used to improve the quality of their services to adult learners.

Recommendations

Serious consideration should be given to restoring "What's the Buzz?" to its 10-month per year publication status. There have been numerous instances of timliness being lost because of the time gap between issues.

In addition, the cut from 128 pages published in 1994-95 to 44 pages in 1995-96 seriously inhibits the goal of the newsletter to furnish readers with the type of information necessary to professional development.

It is our recommendation a thorough examination be undertaken which would evaluate the cost effectiveness and numbers of adult educators reached by other dissemination projects and this cost effectiveness be compared/contrasted to that of our newsletter.

BUREAU OF ADULT BASIC & LITERACY EDUCATION
able
PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Special Project

Vol. 15, No. 1
SEPTEMBER 1995

WHAT'S the Buzz?

PENNSYLVANIA ADULT EDUCATION'S PROFESSIONAL NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER HIGHLIGHTS: College Student Tutors 3 Help for Workplace Programs 3 Grammar Corner 4 From the Podium 4 VISTA in Literacy 5 Newsletter Roundup 6 Database Training 6 Legislative Crisis 6 People & Programs 7 It's a Date 8

From the Bureau

FRUITS OF OUR LABOR

by Cheryl Keenan, Director, Bureau of ABLE

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you back from the long, hot, wonderful summer. As the days begin to shorten and the weather begins to cool, I would like to share some information with you to get you back into the swing of a new season of teaching and learning. Since my appointment to the Bureau, I have worked with you and our Bureau team to improve adult basic and literacy education. This year brings some fruit to bear for our labor over the past two years.

1995-96 contract process. We in the Bureau extend a special thank-you to program directors and administrators for your special efforts in the new Section 322/Act 143 application process. The consolidation of multiple programs into a single state or federal application and contract has greatly reduced the amount of paperwork and frustration involved. This consolidation, coupled with the focus on performance rather than number of specific detailed

Continued on p.2

Adults Do Not Have to Be There . . .

In adult basic and literacy education, a captive audience is an aspiration, not an assumption.

"Adults vote with their feet." This is a favorite adage of adult educators. High adult class drop-out rates have become so expected that many of us don't consider this a problem anymore. The attitude seems to be that if the learning situation doesn't meet the needs of our adult learners and they leave—well, there are always plenty more out there and our classes are too large anyway.

Laubach Literacy Advance's philosophy. The introduction to *Teaching Adults—A Literacy Resource Book*, published by Laubach Literacy Advance, discusses these principles of adult learning:

- Each adult learner is a unique individual and brings to the learning process his or her wealth of knowledge and experience and has individual needs and interests.
- Reading and writing are meaning-based processes; to make meaning, people must be able to recognize language forms as they are being used, understand the purposes for writing, and react to what they read using their prior knowledge, experience, and values and apply the meanings they make to their lives.

Learning is more likely to take place when instruction has meaning.

Understanding. Literacy teacher and author Marilyn Gillespie says that teachers and tutors need to understand the following concepts:

- Instruction in reading, writing, speaking, and listening should allow learners to become independent communicators of ideas and feelings.
- Literacy instruction should help learners to participate in their communities and families and to use their skills to improve the world in which they live.
- Instruction should take into account learners' personal feelings, needs, and concerns. It should aim to overcome any sense of past failure, to encourage risk taking, and to enable learners to reach specific goals.
- Instruction should flow from learner assessment, which should be a shared and ongoing process that helps ensure that programs meet learners' goals.
- Literacy instruction will be more effective if learners help identify objectives and specific activities; learners should be able to tie instruction to their needs, experience success during instruction, and recognize what progress they have made.

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BUREAU, from p.1

guidelines, has allowed us to serve you better by focusing on the more important aspects of applications and by processing your contracts more expeditiously. Our goal was to reduce the average processing time in the Bureau for Act 143 and Section 322 applications from 90 to 45 days. We exceeded this goal: the average processing time within the Bureau for the 186 Section 322 and 145 Act 143 applications approved for funding was approximately 40 days. Additionally, the number which had to be returned to the Bureau by the Legal Office or Comptroller for additional corrections also was significantly reduced. Most programs received their initial check for funding in August, and all but a few of the remaining will receive the initial payment in September. There were still some errors that caused delays for some contracts, but most of these were minor and easily corrected, and most were caught by the advisors during the initial review in the Bureau. A point to remember! The majority of the significant errors were in applications from agencies that did not send representatives to the Administrative Workshops.

Data reporting. Another area where we in the Bureau feel we are making considerable progress is by providing you better service in the process for reporting student, staff, and program data. The pilot automated database and reporting system has been developed and approximately 90 agencies have chosen to participate in the pilot use of the automated system this year. Training in the use of the database will be conducted in a series of workshops in September (see p.6). Programs which will continue to use the manual scannable forms to report data were provided the necessary forms and instructions earlier this month. This is earlier than we have provided the forms most years, but because of printer problems, still later than our goal. Next year, we again will have the July 1 date as our goal.

Literacy Corps. Effective July 1, the Department of Education and, in turn, the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education assumed responsibility for the Governor's Literacy Corps Program. This program previously was administered by the Department of Labor and Industry as part of PennSERVE. The Literacy Corps Program serves to promote lifelong involvement in community service while enhancing the curricula of higher education institutions with service learning opportunities that solve measurable community problems. The Bureau has expanded the scope and eligibility for grants under this program to further promote student volunteer service in literacy programs.

Competitive grants of up to $35,000 are available for the period January 1 through June 30, 1996, to establish collaborative partnerships between institutions of higher education and adult basic education and literacy programs. Applicants can be either partner—the higher education institution or the provider agency. The application deadline is September 30, 1995. Details on specific requirements and procedures were distributed in an announcement in mid-August.

Special projects and programs. In order to maximize the use of Section 353 funds for greater statewide impact, the Bureau funded a number of initiatives to improve the overall quality of adult basic and literacy education. Most notable of the quality improvement initiative is Project EQuAL, which is entering its second year of implementation. Through first-year activities, EQUAL documented the successes of ten pilot sites. The Bureau is publishing a summary of Year One for statewide distribution. EQUAL will continue to build upon that success by expanding to 20 sites during year two, with an emphasis on using program data and learner assessment. Look for more information on EQUAL in this issue.

Another objective for the use of 353 funds is to provide uniform access to staff development projects for all adult educators. To accomplish this, the Bureau has funded several statewide projects. Dr. Richard Cooper will provide statewide training and follow-up activities related to learning disabilities and teaching in multilevel classrooms. The Bureau is also sponsoring a project to develop and implement teacher inquiry and research in four targeted staff development regions. Exciting technology initiatives will provide opportunity for adult educators to network electronically and to use technology for instruction and staff development.

The Bureau funded several local projects to develop model programs that may be replicated. One model is based on the provision of adult literacy services in coordination with six Family Centers. Reflecting the nationwide School-to-Work initiative, two proposals to integrate work-based and school-based learning in adult education programs were funded. Two communities were funded to conduct interagency cross training activities to foster collaborative relationships in the provision of adult basic and literacy education.

Other training opportunities include support of two national conferences in Pennsylvania: the Adult Literacy Technology Conference held in Philadelphia in August, and the Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE) to be held in Pittsburgh in May.

Please keep your eyes and ears open for more information about these and other initiatives throughout the year. Wishing you and your learners a year of growth and good fortune! ❖

WHAT'S the Buzz?

What's the Buzz?, Pennsylvania Adult Education's Professional Newsletter is published five times in 1995-96 by Adult Education Linkage Services, Box 214, Troy, PA 16947, under partial funding provided through the Pennsylvania Department of Education from the U.S. Adult Education Act, Section 353. It is distributed without charge to practitioners of adult basic and literacy education in Pennsylvania and no endorsement of newsletter contents by PDE nor USDOE should be inferred.

Editor: Dave Fluke
Production: Tana Reiff

ACTION RESEARCH: COLLEGE STUDENTS AS LITERACY TUTORS

by Raiana Mearns, Coordinator, Adams County Literacy Council

The action research process first looks at a problem you are having with your program. The next step is to determine one change which could be tried in order to solve that problem. That change is then put in a question form and a baseline is established. This baseline will indicate how successful the change was. Data is collected while the change is taking place. Upon completion, you look at your data and reflect on the results. Finally you ask yourself, "Did it work?" If the process doesn't work you can try again by changing a different factor.

In July 1994, the Adams County Literacy Council was given the opportunity to employ a work-study student from Gettysburg College. The plan was to use this student as a tutor coordinator at the Adams County Prison, and Paula Smith, Coordinator at the Region 6 Staff Development Center, suggested applying for an action research grant. She explained the research must fit into one of four categories: 1) independent study, 2) share/compare, 3) adopt/adapt, or 4) practitioner inquiry centered. With Paula's assistance and information from our state adult literacy resource center, we identified a model developed in Schuylkill County which could be adapted to our situation.

The problem. Because of many problems, we had been having difficulty retaining tutors in our literacy program at the Adams County Prison. We thought college students might have the flexibility necessary for this situation.

The work-study student and I set as our objectives to recruit student volunteer tutors from the college, participate in a training program, coordinate a weekly prison schedule, keep attendance records and a journal, and distribute evaluations at the end of the tutoring year. Optimistically, we set our baseline for success at a 50% retention rate for tutors.

The results. The Adams County Literacy Council trained 30 Gettysburg College students as ESL and basic reading tutors. Coordinating the tutors was easier than anticipated since we were able to use the college e-mail system and the college mail. We also had some community tutors and a VISTA volunteer involved in the tutoring program.

At the end of the year we had retained 35% of the original tutors. Since the number of inmates involved in the program also decreased we were able to meet the needs of the adult students who remained in the program. Although I did not meet the criteria for success, we did provide literacy skills training for a number of inmates.

Recommendations. 1) To see definitive results in an action research project adhere to the idea of one change at a time. 2) It is better to have too many tutors than too few. 3) College students make excellent tutors. They have great energy and enthusiasm and the prisoners really enjoy talking with them. However, they are very busy with campus commitments. 4) Although we had great tutors from the college, the tutors who stuck with our program were those from the community.

For more information, call me at (717) 334-3065. ❖

Members of the Adams County Literacy Council at the 1995 NE Regional Literacy Conference, from left: Ken Bucher, Sue Bucher, Raiana Mearns, Bill Pritt.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE FOR WORKPLACE PROGRAMS

Priscilla Carman of the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy at Penn State tells us a resource notebook and trainer's guide containing a database of resource persons in workplace literacy are now available through the AdvancE state adult literacy resource center (1-800-992-2283).

The materials were developed as part of a WorkNet project, funded under section 353, designed to expand the state's workplace literacy provider and trainer network. Seventeen persons participated in two five-hour training sessions in February and April, 1995.

WorkNet participants are available to provide regional technical assistance on a variety of workplace literacy issues and topics. Contact Priscilla Carman at (814) 863-3777, e-mail psc3@psu.edu.

Workplace literacy technical assistance is also available through the National Workforce Assistance Collaborative (NWAC), which works with businesses and service and information providers, (202) 289-2915). E-mail address is Bernice_C._Jones@nab.com. ❖

DO YOU HAVE AN E-MAIL ADDRESS?

If so, the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE) would like to contact you. Whether or not you're a member of PAACE there are instances during the year when important information can be disseminated fastest by e-mail. If you have an e-mail address, e-mail PAACE at: PAACE@aol.com.

From the podium ...

SURPLUS PEOPLE

by Dr. Gordon Godbey

One issue about which most of the public know little is the matter of illiteracy among adults, or severe undereducation, making these people of little use in a democracy. In fact, undereducated adults' ability to get information on their own and form reasoned opinions is virtually nil.

These illiterates or semiliterates cannot manage a job much more complicated than shoveling dirt, pumping gasoline (if they can find a "full-service station") or with luck, assembling parts in a factory, a skill not much beyond a chimpanzee's.

Officially we are embarrassed as a community, a state, or nation about having so many such people. Officials, governors' wives, and even the United States President feel obligated to make appropriate words about how we must work with these people, and bring them to a new life through literacy.

One recent push came under a name that invites incredulity, or even laughter: Literacy for the Homeless. In the words of Little Orphan Annie, "Great Leapin' Lizards!" If a person has no home, how do we find him, set him down, and teach him to read and do simple numbers? But the money has been available, and so the literacy industry uses it somehow. It reminds one of the words of a former Soviet worker, who was accused by a visiting foreign reporter of not doing his job: "They pretend to pay us, and we pretend to work."

In fairness, let us say that virtually all the tutors, teachers, and teachers of teachers of illiterate adults are good folk, with very good-hearted intentions. In many cases their work has enabled unfortunates to move up economically, socially, and in self-esteem. That is not at issue. Our screed is about the lack of higher-level understanding of the issue. In most cases, the illiterate adult did not learn in school, and dropped out early. In some cases, the person has low ability, often beset by poverty, perhaps with illness. But not all such persons so beset became illiterate dropouts. Secondly, even if the person had persisted in school until literate, there may well have been no job for such low-level skills as he had.

We have surplus people today. We have no work for many people who ten or even fewer years ago could have squeaked by doing routine work.

Our first need, one can believe, is not just skill in reading and doing numbers, not in getting diplomas from schools. These schools did not teach us how to deal with the surplus people, the "nonproductive" people. ❖

Dr. Gordon Godbey is professor emeritus of Penn State University, a former president of the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education, and a member of the PAACE Board of Directors. The above was excerpted from a column he writes for The Luminary *of Muncy, PA.*

ADULTS DO NOT..., from p.1

Teaching Adults—A Literacy Resource Book is available from Laubach Literacy Action, Box 131, Syracuse NY 13210.

An *ERIC Digest* titled "Guidelines for Working With Adult Learners" notes, "Given the wide support for learner involvement, the discrepancy between adult education theory and practice is perplexing." The *Digest* suggests some ways in which instructors of adults can become more learner-centered in their practice:

1. Understand the nature of the adult learner. They tend to be self-directing; they have a rich reservoir of experience that can serve as a resource for learning; adults' readiness to learn is frequently affected by their need to know or do something; adults are generally motivated to learn due to internal or intrinsic factors.

2. Assess learner needs. Through needs assessment, with adult learner involvement, adults can identify their problem areas in relation to the course topics.

3. Create an effective adult learning environment. Support learners through an environment that meets both their physical and psychological needs.

4. Capitalize on the first session. First impressions are frequently lasting ones.

5. Support opportunities for individual problem solving. Adults have many responsibilities besides that of learner and consequently may feel a sense of isolation in their student role. Encourage formation of study groups, and always be available for individual conferences.

ERIC Digest #154 is available from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education, 1900 Kenny Road, Columbus, OH 43210, and through AskERIC online. ❖

A GRAMMER CORNER

Fewer or Less?

by Abbei Brawley
Southwest Regional Advisor, Bureau of ABLE

Time to settle in and focus on making this year better than ever. I want to help you do that with some hints and rules for grammar and usage, writing, structure/syntax, and mechanics. For example, are you sure you know the difference between *few* and *less*?

Few applies to number; *fewer* modifies plural nouns that apply to:

- distances (fewer blocks to run, fewer miles to go)
- sums of money (fewer tens in that stack)
- periods of time (fewer hours in a day)

Less applies to:

- degree (less sturdy, less reliable)
- value (less worth)
- amount (less money, less time)
- It modifies collective nouns (less staff present, less population). ❖

Editor's note: Readers with specific grammar concerns should contact Ms. Brawley at (717) 787-6344.

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Project EQuAL

A Report on Year One

Fall 1995

Project EQuAL—Educational Quality for Adult Literacy—has completed Year One of a three-year initiative launched in 1994 by Pennsylvania's Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education. The goal: to build the capacity of local adult education providers to collect and use data about their learners and their programs. The purpose: for better program planning and management—to become more effective in meeting the educational needs of our adult learners. The results from EQuAL will be used to specify statewide performance standards.

Why this effort? Pennsylvania is moving forward with its plan to set standards for adult education in response to the requirements of the National Literacy Act and the call for educational accountability on the state and federal levels. Standards will include performance levels for adult learners, adult education program staff, and program operations. Through the activities of Project EQuAL, information will be collected to set these standards. In addition, data collection and analysis procedures will be developed to assist programs in improving the quality of their services.

Pennsylvania's effort is not isolated. The goals of EQuAL are part of a national context for improving accountability and the quality of educational services.

During the first year, ten pilot sites documented their use of learner assessment and other data to manage their programs. Participating programs represented the diversity of adult education providers across the state, including school districts, prisons, literacy councils, community-based organizations, and colleges. A great deal was learned from this first step.

WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

Through the activities of Year One, a number of findings:

- Pilot projects instituted more formal data collection procedures—new ways of gathering and filing data to maximize the usefulness of the information.
- Pilot projects reviewed the quality of data collected. Projects asked teachers and tutors to provide more detailed information about student goals and accomplishments.
- In a number of the pilot project sites, learners were not staying in the program long enough to be post-tested. Some pilot coordinators met with teachers and tutors in their sites and discussed ways of encouraging learners to persist in their programs.

Over ...

"Project EQuAL has encouraged more active participation from our teachers—even those who were not part of the pilot."

Sandy Strunk, Lancaster-Lebanon IU #13

"Our program collects a lot of data about students. EQuAL made us think about how to better organize, summarize, and categorize it."

John Vrana, Pennsylvania State University–Beaver Campus, Adult Literacy Action

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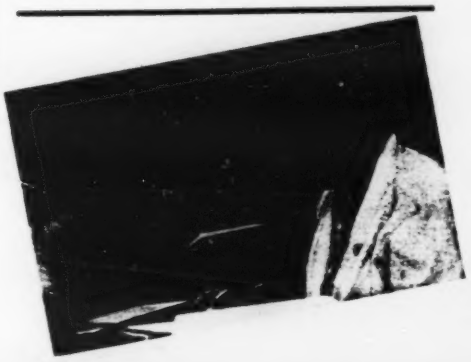


"EQuAL made us look at the data about students and challenged some of our assumptions."

Jeff Woodyard, Tri-County OIC, Harrisburg

And a number of insights concerning assessment, curriculum and instruction, and staff development ...

On Assessment:

- Many students who pass the Official GED Practice Test never actually take the test.
- The criteria for student progress needs to be reviewed.
- Because programs focus primarily on students' problems rather than their accomplishments, outcome data often are not collected.
- Programs need to review testing procedures—such as to establish regular post-testing schedule, communicate the importance of post-testing to teachers and tutors, and find ways to decrease learners' test anxiety.
- ESL programs may need different types of standardized tests—for example, a test for low-level English skills.
- Student involvement in their own assessment may increase their motivation.

On Curriculum and Instruction:

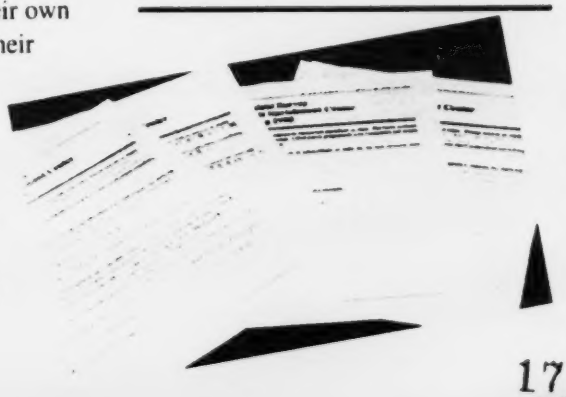
- There are differences in the perceptions of teachers and learners in ESL programs concerning the goals for instruction.

On Staff Development:

- Teachers and tutors learned more about how to use competencies to show progress.
- They more frequently used test scores to guide instruction.
- They examined various forms of assessment and ways of administering them to reduce students' test anxiety.
- They documented applied performance assessments.
- They conducted follow-up with students who leave the program.
- They used data to manage a classroom (e.g., data from learning styles inventory).
- They used support services to promote retention.
- They shared promising practices.

"Reviewing the learner assessment data for EQuAL, we realized that teachers and students are accomplishing a lot in the classroom, but we need to find ways to document it more systematically."

Pat Haff, Community Women's Education Project, Philadelphia



YEAR ONE ACTIVITIES

❖ The Bureau tapped the professional services of COSMOS Corporation of Bethesda, Maryland, whose staff bring to this project a depth of expertise on assessment and quality-improvement systems. Judy Alamprese of COSMOS is directing the project.

❖ **October 1994.** COSMOS's project staff trained the Bureau's Regional Advisors on the use of monitoring materials.

❖ **November.** COSMOS's staff met with EQuAL Advisory Committee members. Also, to inform the larger adult education community, a teleconference was broadcast, led by Judy Alamprese; Cheryl Keenan, Director of ABLE; and Linda McCrossan of the Adult Literacy Center of Lehigh Valley.

❖ **January 1995.** COSMOS conducted a training session with staff from the pilot project sites. Training focused on methods for collecting and using learner assessment and other program data to improve the program quality. Together, the pilots and COSMOS selected some 900 learners on which to track assessment (pre- and post-test data, skills achieved, competencies attained).

❖ **February–May.** The pilot sites worked diligently, completing Learner Assessment Forms and Data for Program Management Logs. COSMOS reviewed sample data collection forms, provided telephone technical assistance, and reviewed the progress of Project EQuAL with pilot site coordinators. COSMOS then conducted a mail survey of 30 teachers and tutors who had participated in EQuAL and end-of-year telephone interviews with pilot site coordinators.

❖ **June.** COSMOS conducted a review meeting of Year One activities with pilot site coordinators and Advisory Council members.

NEXT ON THE AGENDA

Year Two is under way. To broaden the scope of EQuAL, ten more pilot project sites are becoming involved. They too are being trained in procedures for collecting and using learner assessment and program data. Meanwhile, Year One pilot projects will continue with their data collection.

All the while, COSMOS staff will provide technical assistance to all of the pilot project staff and the Bureau.

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VISTA: SERVING THE GOAL OF LITERACY IN PENNSYLVANIA

by Carrie L. McClure, VISTA

"Your pay will be low; the conditions of your labor often will be difficult. But you will have the satisfaction of leading a great national effort and you will have the ultimate reward which comes to those who serve their fellow man."

The first 20 Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) heard this message as President Johnson welcomed them to the White House on December 12, 1964. In the 30 years to follow, VISTA has weathered political priority changes and budget cuts, but one aspect of the national service program has held steady: its commitment to serving poverty-stricken communities, opening doors for people through community-based education, employment, and grass-roots empowerment projects.

A good portion of VISTA involvement has been in adult basic education. Since the beginning, 14,965 adult literacy tutors have been trained under VISTA. In both rural and urban areas across Pennsylvania, nine nonprofit literacy organizations benefit from the work of 24 VISTAs.

VISTA volunteers serve a minimum of one year, receiving a subsistence allowance that puts them on the same economic level as many of the people they are serving. At the end of their service they receive an educational grant of $4,725. Unlike the new AmeriCorps USA, VISTAs do not work in a direct service capacity such as a tutor or teacher. Instead, they serve as community organizers, trainers, developers, and fundraisers. Their goal is to build or expand a program that will be more self-sufficient when their service is completed.

Martin McClure, VISTA with the YMCA of Philadelphia, assists student Yvonne Bass with editing an essay on the computer

Pam Logsdon works as a VISTA with the Crawford County Literacy Council, Inc., in Meadville. She says, "In small councils, VISTAs do just about everything." For her, this includes recruiting volunteers for the one-on-one tutoring program, training the volunteers, assessing learners, matching tutors and learners, and facilitating workshops and recognition events.

Darlene Benci, a retired social service caseworker, now serves as a VISTA at the Greene County Library System's Adult Literacy Project. "I've grown more as a VISTA than I did as a caseworker," Darlene says with a smile. One of her duties at her site in rural Pennsylvania is to raise community awareness about the services her organization offers.

At the Adams County Literacy Council in Gettysburg, Jason Giersch works on fundraising. Jason was instrumental in obtaining a recent grant of $800 from the Southland Corporation. He also organizes a local prison program that does one-on-one tutoring with the prison inmates.

In Philadelphia, the Mayor's Commission on Literacy (MCOL) coordinates the service of six VISTAs involved in adult literacy. Three work directly with the Commission and three at nonprofit organizations (YMCA, Community Occupational Readiness and Placement Program, and the Center for Literacy.)

Justine Hamilton is at the Mayor's Commission. As the Volunteer Site Coordinator, Justine assists new literacy sites in organizing literacy programs. She is about to complete her second year of service. Her first year and a half were spent in a literacy program In Kentucky. When asked why she chose to continue as a volunteer past the first year, Justine responded, "VISTA Is an education for me ... a wonderful opportunity to be part of a team."

Scot Mentzer, Director of the YMCA Adult Literacy Program, feels strongly that VISTAs are a valuable resource for nonprofit organizations. "VISTAs are highly motivated people," he comments. "They add a lot to our program." He adds, "VISTAs have a key role in helping better our own country."

Currently the YMCA in Philadelphia has only one VISTA, but it hopes to add two more this year. Martin McClure, the current VISTA, was recruited from California. After a career in recreation management, VISTA was an opportunity to combine a lifelong love of service with his interest in education. Martin manages the YMCA computer lab and sums up the feelings of many when he refers to his service as a win-win situation for everyone involved. "I have the opportunity to learn ... and the YMCA could not afford to pay a staff person. I think National Service is a cost-effective way to supplement agencies like the Y. The government is not just throwing money at the problem; they are supporting real people doing real work towards worthwhile goals."

Obtain more information by contacting the VISTA State Office at (215) 596-4077. Keep in mind that literacy VISTAs have been put on hold until January and these programs may even be eliminated. ❖

Newsletter Roundup

In which we note types and contents of professional newsletters to assist Buzz readers in finding their way through the adult education newsletter maze ...

❖ ***GED Items*** is a free publication from the General Educational Development Testing Service (GEDTS). Its May/June 1995 feature article tells of a GED graduate who has been named Chief of Naval Operations for the U.S. Navy. Admiral Mike Boorda is responsible for 479,000 active-duty sailors and 500,000 reservists and serves as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He left school at 16, enlisted in the Navy, and started preparing for the GED in boot camp. He was commissioned in 1962, attended the U.S. Naval War College, and received a B.A. from the University of Rhode Island in 1971. Adm. Boorda was awarded the GEDTS Special Recognition Award at the 1995 GED Administrators Conference. (Mention this achievement to recruiting officers who discriminate against GED graduates.) To get on the mailing list for *GED Items* contact GEDTS, One Dupont Cir. NW, Ste. 250, Washington, DC 20036-1163.

❖ *LVA Works: A Guide to Workplace Education* is featured in the Summer 1995 ***The Reader,*** from Literacy Volunteers of American (LVA). The new guide focuses a management approach to building workplace literacy capacity and includes information about various workplace models, packaging and marketing services, conducting a literacy needs assessment, accessing Internet resource materials, and other information designed to help agencies develop Workplace Literacy programs. The Guide is $8 from LVA, 5795 Widewaters Parkway, Syracuse, NY 13214.

❖ ***TESL-L*** is an electronic discussion forum for ESL teachers, as reported in the June 1995 Region 8 Staff Development Center Newsletter. TESL-L is available on the Internet/e-mail and has links to members in 83 countries. To join, send e-mail to listserve@cunyvm.cuny.edu. Text should be SUB TESL-L (your first and last name). Or send a message to Anthea Tillyer at abthc@cunyvm.cuny.edu. For more information contact Elizabeth Mitchell, Region 8 coordinator, (610) 902-8518.

❖ The Summer 1995 ***READ USA Update,*** from the American Legion in cooperation with public libraries, mentions the success of Legion Post 182 in Lewisburg's efforts and the Union County Library. Post 182 donated two sets of the "I Want to Read" video series and, reports librarian Kathleen Vellam, "They have done quite well. We've been very pleased." The article closes with the comment: "Their story illustrates well how yesterday's literacy actions may determine tomorrow's literacy achievements.

DATABASE TRAINING IN PROGRESS

by Dr. William Murphy, Research Associate, Bureau of ABLE

Three of seven training sessions remain for the 99 agencies in the student database project. If your agency is participating, you should have received an invitation; if not, you should have received your student and staff forms for the new program year.

The training sessions, presented by Bill Murphy and Mary Scarceli, data analyst for the Center for Literacy in Philadelphia, take place in a computer lab. Participants install the database and enter data in the enrollment, attendance, assessment, closeout, and site screens. They see how to do reports on site attendance, enrollment, student demographics, and student outcomes. Finally, they learn how to prepare a file to submit to the Bureau.

The database applications will be provided in both DOS and Macintosh versions. A detailed manual of instruction is included, and the Center for Literacy will provide technical assistance for the remainder of the program year. In subsequent years, we hope to involve the Regional Staff Development Centers as part of an overall strategy on technology.

Upcoming sessions are at Drexel University, September 19, 9-12 or12:30-3:30; Lancaster-Lebanon IU #13, September 21, 9-12; and Lehigh University, September 22, 9-12. For more information please contact our office at (717)783-4333.❖

ADULT ED: AN ENDANGERED SPECIES

"We may become an endangered species," says Jean Henry, Legislative co-chair for the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE). Jean is keeping PAACE members informed as to the status of federal legislation which threatens most Section 322 programs (11-15% cuts in 1995-96, 35-40% in the future). If you're not a member of your professional association, which is working hard to counteract threats to our profession, shame on you! Write PAACE, Box 3796, Harrisburg, PA 17105.

Jean asks *every* adult educator to urge their U.S. Senators to:

1. *Decouple the Workforce Development Act from the Dole Welfare Reform Bill.* The Dole bill folds adult ed into welfare reform.

2. *Vote for the Jeffords-Pell Amendment to the Senate version of SR143.* According to PAACE this would "insure a fair division of resources."

If you have not informed your students of this situation or contacted your U.S. Senator, there is a real possibility *your* job and *your* program will not be around next year. For more information contact Jean Henry at (717) 273-6575, after 4. To contact your U.S. Senators and their staffs: Rick Santorum—fax (202) 228-4991, attn: Will Sears; Arlen Specter—fax (202) 224-8165, attn: Michael Kulis. ❖

People and Programs

◆ Four persons recently came to work in the ABLE Bureau.

Ann Diffendall is the Administrative Officer in the Contract Management Unit. Ann worked in Teacher Certification for 21 years and with EEO for four years before joining the Bureau. Also assisting in the CMU is **Andrea Cunningham**. Andrea provided temporary services in various offices before coming to ABLE. She also assists by providing computer tutorials.

Mary P. Cain, Education Administrative Associate, served in Teacher Certification for 16 years before joining the GED section. Understaffed for many months, the GED Section is beginning to see above the stacks of transcript requests, tests to be graded, and scores to be entered.

Audia J. Glass is a program analyst in the Special Programs and Projects Division. This past year she worked in Pennsylvania's management intern program. Audia's educational background includes an undergraduate degree in criminology and a master's degree in industrial labor relations, both from IUP. Audia will do research into and analysis of various aspects of special demonstration and staff development projects.

◆ Congratulations to the **Erie Reading Council, Delaware Valley Reading Council,** and **Luzerne County Reading Council** for receiving the IRA (International Reading Association) Honor Council Awards at the recent IRA Conference. The awards were a special salute to 29 IRA Councils throughout the U.S. which have achieved Honor Council status for the past 13 years by demonstrating well-rounded programs serving both the council and the community in the areas of community service programs, literacy projects, communications, and membership.

◆ Congratulations to **Nancy Woods,** who received the Athena Award from the Business and Professional Women's Club at their annual Salute to Beaver County Women. Nancy is Director of Adult Literacy Action (ALA) at the Beaver Campus of Penn State.

◆ Two bio notes inadvertently omitted from *The Pennsylvania ABLE Staff Handbook, 1995 Edition:*

Jane W. Ditmars, M.Ed., recently left her position as an administrator of the Tri-Valley Literacy Region 7 Staff Development Center at Lehigh University. She is currently available as a consultant and trainer in the field of adult literacy and can be reached at P.O. Box 3586, Easton, PA 18043-3586, (610) 253-1891, fax (610) 253-4963, e-mail JDitmars@aol.com.

Stanley J. Nowak Jr., Ph.D., is Associate Professor of Spanish, Humanities and Social Science and Director of the Penn State Allentown Center for Intercultural Community-Building. Dr. Nowak facilitates intensive five-day programs on this theme for a variety of clients, in addition to offering workshops and speaking on diversity-related topics. Reach him at 3416 Bursonville Rd., Riegelsville, PA 18077, (610) 346-6621 (voice and fax), e-mail: n33@psu.edu.

◆ Laubach Literacy International (LLI), Syracuse, NY, has awarded grants to 12 community-based programs throughout the U.S., including the **Germantown Women's Educational Project (GWEP)**, Philadelphia. The Women in Literacy grants are part of a global campaign sponsored by LLI combining a focus on women with literacy or English as a Second Language. GWEP will use its grant to support three ABE and GED classes built around themes of interest to women, as well as a new transitional support group to help women prepare for success after leaving the project.

◆ Laubach Literacy Action (LLA) has named two Pennsylvanians to their national Steering Committee. **Pat Gaul,** Executive Director of the Delaware County Literacy Council is past chair of the LLA Long Range Planning Committee and the LLA Training and Certification Committee. She has 18 years' experience as a practitioner and administrator in literacy and is a former chair of Tutors of Literacy in the Commonwealth (TLC), a program division of PAACE. **Walter Long** of Glenshaw is a new reader who has served on the Board of Directors of the Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council, as chair of the New Reader Committee for the Northeast Literacy Conference, and as a delegate to the Third and Fourth National Adult Literacy Congresses.

◆ The Easton *Morning Call,* Sunday edition, devoted two full pages with photos to the "When Bonds Are Broken" prison/family literacy program, now in its fifth year.

The program was started in 1991 by **Twila Evans,** with a grant from the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy. Inmates at the **Northampton County Prison,** Easton receive basic academic instruction, as well as training in family and parenting skills.

Program coordinator Twila Evans points proudly to the drop in recidivism for the inmates involved in the "When Bonds are Broken" program. She notes that the public does not appreciate the fact that when one man is imprisoned, it affects the entire family. "The family is forced to go on welfare and the children have an absentee father—their support is gone."

Submitting an item to People and Programs? Mugshots are welcomed!

It's a Date!

SEPTEMBER 1995

21 Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy Forum.

27-29 15th Annual National Rural Families Conference, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS. Contact: KSU, 241 College Court Bldg., Manhattan, KS 66506-6009.

30 Pennsylvania Adult and Continuing Education Research Conference, Indiana Univ. of Pennsylvania, Indiana, PA, 8:30 a.m.–4 p.m. Sponsored by PAACE, Indiana Univ. of PA, and Pennsylvania State University. Conference fee: $30. Contact: IUP School of Continuing Education, (412) 357-2227.

OCTOBER 1995

5–6 Second Call to Action Conference, invitational conference sponsored by the Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy (PSCAL), Pennsylvania 2000 Adult Literacy Task Force, and Mellon Bank. Contact: PSCAL, (717) 730-9161.

12-14 Fifth annual National Association for Adults with Special Learning Needs (NAASLN) national conference; Northbrook, IL. Contact: Dr. Richard Cooper, (610) 525-8336.

13-14 18th Annual Conference of the Orton Dyslexia Society, Greater Philadelphia Branch, Shipley School, Bryn Mawr. Theme: "Dyslexia Update, 1995: From Creative Theory to Inspired Practice." Contact: Greater Philadelphia Branch, Box 251, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010, (610) 527-1548.

16-19 Keystone State Reading Association Conference, Hershey. Contact: Susan Gottlieb, 45 Highland Dr., Wilkes-Barre, PA 18705, (717) 474-5942.

18-21 1995 Annual Conference, Literacy Volunteers of America, Buffalo, NY. Contact: LVA, (315) 445-8000.

26-28 17th International Conference on Learning Disabilities, Chicago; Contact: Council for Learning Disabilities, PO Box 40303, Overland Park, KS 66204.

NOVEMBER 1995

1 National Family Literacy Day. Contact: National Center for Family Literacy, Ste. 200 Waterfront Plaza, 325 West Main St., Louisville, KY 40202.

3-5 AAACE Adult Education Conference, Kansas City, MO. Theme: "Fast Forward to the Future: Technology, Assessment and Professionalism." Contact: American Association for Adult and Continuing Education, 1200 19th St. NW, Ste. 300, Washington, DC 20036, (202) 429-5131.

MAY 1996

16-18 Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE) National Conference, Pittsburgh. Contact: Al Fascetti, (412) 338-3700.

Fall Workshops for Librarians and Literacy Providers

"Breaking the Access Barrier" is a project which trains literacy volunteer tutors to use computers to help adult learners develop literacy skills.

Training, conducted by the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy and Commonwealth Libraries, has been held at three sites, and staff and participants are being made available at three workshops to share their experiences and demonstrate how to use multimedia and instructional techniques to help adults and their families develop literacy and thinking skills.

Workshops are scheduled for:

- **Butler Community College: October 20, 1995.**
- **East Shore Area Library, Harrisburg: October 26, 1995.**
- **Osterhout Free Library, Wilkes-Barre: October 27, 1995.**

For more information contact Priscilla Carman, (814) 863-3777.

Editor's Buzz

OFF WITH THE OLD. As noted in our June 1995 issue, the budget of WHAT'S THE BUZZ? was reduced for 1995-96. This is the first issue of "The New" BUZZ.

This year we are publishing only five issues of eight pages each. Our "People and Programs," "Newsletter Roundup," and "It's a Date!" features—all well accepted by readers—will be retained. The "Spotlight" section of professional development information has been dropped, but we will continue to bring you the latest information from a variety of research sources.

Format: We are pleased that Tana Reiff, as part of her duties in coordinating staff development communications for the ABLE Bureau, will be handling our prepress production and editing.

Deadlines and mailing: The four remaining copy deadlines are October 16, December 15, February 12, and April 15. Issues will be mailed on November 15, January 17, March 15, and May 15.

So ... We're glad to be back and hope you'll send us news of what you're doing—publications you find useful, successful teaching techniques, etc. We look forward to hearing from you.

Dave Fluke, Editor

WHAT'S THE BUZZ?
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Vol. 15, No. 2
NOVEMBER 1995

WHAT'S the Buzz?

PENNSYLVANIA ADULT EDUCATION'S PROFESSIONAL NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER HIGHLIGHTS: GED Changes 2 COABE Call for Presenters 2 Data Training 4 Summer Institute 4 Practitioner Inquiry 5 Newsletter Roundup 6 People & Programs 7 It's a Date 8

'The Times They Are A-changin'... '

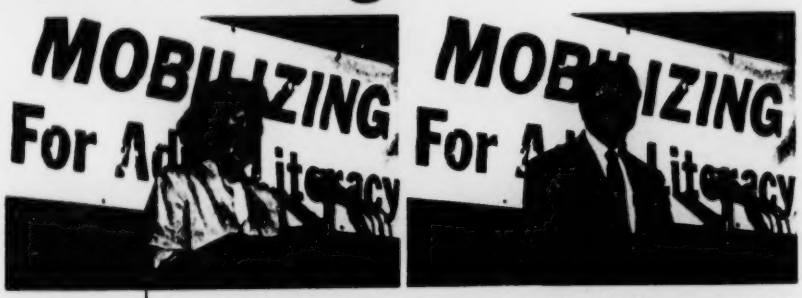
Service coordination and accountability are shaping the future of adult literacy.

The May 1994 Call to Action I: Mobilizing for Adult Literacy and Learning in Pennsylvania conference brought together more than 200 representatives from business, education, media, and government to discuss the delivery of adult literacy services in Pennsylvania and how, through the combined efforts of conference attendees and the groups they represented, it can be improved.

Coordination and *accountability* were the two buzzwords coming out of Call to Action I last year. Since then, Pennsylvania has seen a number of the Conference's recommendations implemented: coordination across funding streams (although much remains to be done); an increase in awareness and programs in workforce education; increased incorporation of technology opportunities into adult education; and, arguably, an increase in public awareness for literacy needs in the Commonwealth.

Call to Action II: "Planning for Adult Literacy" was held in Carlisle on October 5. The day-long Conference was cosponsored by Pennsylvania 2000 (a coalition of business, education, and state government leaders committed to education reform), the Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy (PSCAL, a coalition of adult literacy providers, business and industry, educators, government, media, and professional associations), and Mellon Bank (which contributed financial support for the Conference).

JoAnn Weinberger, Executive Director of the Center for Literacy in Philadelphia and cochair of the Adult Literacy Task Force of PA 2000, summed up the Conference: "The uncoordinated, piecemeal efforts to combat illiteracy are no longer effective." The more than 150 Conference attendees heard some new buzzwords,



Pennsylvania's First Lady, Michele Ridge, and Rep. Bill Goodling addressed "Call to Action II" conferees—both from firsthand knowledge of adult literacy learning.

listened to representatives of federal and state government, and came away from the series of meetings and presentations with one clear thought: "The times they are a-changin'."

Speakers and buzzwords. Michele Ridge, First Lady of Pennsylvania, brought greetings to the Conference and noted her background as a librarian for 20 years and as former Executive Director of the Erie County Library System. She commended those present for their ongoing efforts on behalf of literacy and emphasized the commitment of herself and Governor Ridge to make Pennsylvania a leader among states in lifelong learning. Ms. Ridge said that literacy is a human-dignity issue and emphasized the roles of adult

Continued on p.4

Adult Literacy on the Internet

A vast library of adult ed professional resources is literally at your fingertips.

According to statewide surveys, only about 30% of the state's adult educators are using computers. However, the Internet makes available some excellent materials and information previously unavailable except to the most intrepid researcher. Although we cannot hope to answer all readers' questions or provide all the sources of relevant information on the Internet, this issue of the Buzz may whet your appetite.

In basic terms, the Net permits individuals to connect to and access sources of information at various sites. It also supports public bulletin boards (computerized forums allowing users to communicate with other users).

Continued on p.3

the Buzz
NOVEMBER 1995

From the Bureau

GED TESTING SEEING CHANGES

by Larry Goodwin, State GED Administrator

As we approach the year 2000, there are many items on the education agenda. Some have to do with expectations. Others have to do with teaching techniques and classroom equipment. The GED Testing Service has a major effort ongoing for GED 2000, which will address test content, calculators, and computers. Some changes, however, can't wait. A major topic of discussion at the recent GED annual conference and Advisory Board meetings has been the raising of the minimum score of the GED test. It is the policy of the American Council on Education to allow individual states to determine the minimum score and/or average or mean score as long as they meet or exceed those prescribed by the Council. For the current year 23 states and the District of Columbia have minimum scores of 40 or above with an average score of 45 or above for all five tests of the battery. Also, all Canadian provinces and most territories have minimum scores exceeding the current minimum. Other states, including Pennsylvania, have established the minimum score as 35 per test with an average score of 45 per test for an overall minimum score of 225 for the total five-test battery. The Commonwealth has used this as its standard since 1981.

On September 27, 1995, the Commission on Educational Credit and Credentials, which sets the standards for the American Council on Education's adult education programs, passed a resolution raising the minimum score requirements for passing the GED Tests. The decision followed a unanimous vote by the GED Advisory Committee in August and majority vote by the GED Administrators at their annual conference in July. The new standard will take effect on January 1, 1997. The minimum score will be 40 on each test with an average score of 45 on each test of the battery. The current total minimum score for the full test battery of 225 will remain the same.

The new standard was met by 66% of the graduating high school seniors who participated in the nationwide norming study of the GED Test conducted in the Spring of 1995. Had this standard been in effect in 1994, the pass rate for Pennsylvania would have been 68.3% instead of the 73.9% attained under the current standard. A further analysis of the impact of this policy change for those 17,941 Pennsylvania candidates who passed the GED test battery in 1994 revealed that 1,305 scored 39 or below on at least one test. Only 52 candidates scored 39 or below on *more* than one test. The Math and Writing Skills tests were significantly represented on the list of scores between 35 and 39, with 710 and 432, respectively. Literature and Arts had 137, with scores in the 35 to 39 range, followed by Science at 40 and Social Studies, 38.

Bottom line. The change means that 40 states and territories must raise their standards to comply with the American Council policy. It also means that our adult education students must be better prepared to take the test. This more rigorous standard reflects changes in the workplace environment and higher education, both of which have become more demanding, especially in the areas of math and written communication. The new standard is expected to add additional credibility to the GED certification and encourage businesses to accept the GED graduate more readily as an equal to his/her high school counterpart.

As we prepare to implement this change, we must put it on a positive spin in order to best support our adult students. The best approach would be for them to look on this change as a necessary response to the changing workplace. For most candidates, it will have little to no impact. For a few it means they will have to exert greater emphasis on their weaker subject(s). If we are "out in front" on this one, we can lead our students successfully over this hurdle that adds additional rigor to GED testing and, therefore, greater credibility to the Commonwealth Diploma. In the 13 months we have to implement this change, we can assist our adult learners in meeting the challenge.❖

COABE Conference Invites Presenters

May 16-18, 1996 will be red-letter days in Pennsylvania Adult Basic and Literacy Education, and Buzz readers are invited to submit proposals for a presentation at the National Conference of the Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE) to be held in Pittsburgh. If you are "Inclined to Excellence" (the Pittsburgh Incline—get it?) in adult education and feel you have something to share with your colleagues, submit a proposal before November 27, 1995, to: COABE '96 Conference Proposal, Dr. G. Michael Vavrek, 700 West Main St., Magee Center, Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania, Bloomsburg, PA 17815. Contact Dr. Vavrek with your questions at (717) 389-4420, e-mail vavr@husky.bloomu.edu.❖

what's the Buzz?

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Editor: Dave Fluke
Copy & Production: Tana Reiff
Editorial Board: Bootsie Barbour, Ella Morin, Audia Glass, Tana Reiff

This publication is available in alternative media on request.

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LITERACY ON THE INTERNET

(from p.1)

Surfing the Net. Finding information on the Net can be a hit-or-miss proposition, so several universities have created user-friendly tools to help. One of the most widely used is Gopher, an information organizer that locates information without the user's having to know where it is stored. Most of NCAL's research reports are available free via NCAL's Gopher: litserver.literacy.upenn.edu.

Other, similar tools are World Wide Web (WWW) and Wide Area Information Servers (WAIS).

Listservs are electronic "mailing lists" of persons interested in a common topic. Many times listservs result in discussion groups, with members exchanging information and comments. They have become a popular way for literacy practitioners to have interactive discussions with one another. To join a listserv, one needs to have an Internet e-mail address. Most major online services, such as America Online, CompuServe, and Prodigy, have e-mail systems.

In the May 1995 *NCAL Connections* from the National Center on Adult Literacy, R. Karl Rethemeyer notes six literacy-related listservs with literacy members and how to join one. (Send e-mail to subscribe, give your name, and you will receive messages sent by other members. You will have the capability to send messages as well).

Literacy listservs. In addition to listservs discussing national public-policy issues in adult literacy (NLA) and Workplace Literacy (WEC-L and NWAC-L), Dr. Rethemeyer lists: LITERACY, a discussion of a wide range of instructional issues in adult literacy; PRISON-L, a discussion among people who currently teach or have taught in prisons; and NUMERACY, a discussion of issues in adult numeracy instruction and research.

Barbara Van Horn of Penn State's Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy notes four new online listserv discussion groups available through the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL). Subscribe to the following by send an e-mail message to listproc@literacy.nifl.gov:

- National Center for Family Literacy: subscribe NIFLFamily
- National Center for Adult Literacy and Learning Disabilities: subscribe NIFL-ALLD
- Workplace Literacy at the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy: subscribe NIFL-WORKPLACE
- The National Clearinghouse for Literacy Education: subscribe NIFLESL

Give your first name and last name with no other text in the message; you will receive a return "welcome."

ERIC full text. The ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education is coordinating the development of a file of full-text material in adult literacy. Agencies included in the project are ERIC/ACVE; the U.S. Department of Education, Division of Adult Education and Literacy Clearinghouse; the Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education; Laubach Literacy, and the National Center for Adult Literacy at the University of Pennsylvania. The materials are located on the AskERIC Gopher (ericir.syr.edu).

For a copy of the ERIC Key titled "Locating Adult Literacy Information and Materials on the Internet," Contact ERIC, The Center on Education and Training for Employment, 1900 Kenny Rd., Columbus, OH 43210.

Sources of resources. Pennsylvania's Regional Staff Development Centers (RSDCs) now have online and e-mail capabilities. This means, even if your program does not provide these services, you may be able to access the "Information Superhighway" through your RSDC. Contact your RSDC for specifics. Many public libraries also offer e-mail and Internet capabilities.

An excellent resource for locating Internet resources is *Internet Directory of Literacy and Adult Education Resources*, available from the Adult Literacy Resource Center, 215 Summit Ave., Mall #5019, St. Paul, MN 55105, (662) 962-5570. Cost is $10. The Directory can also be accessed online at htt://www.cybernetics.net/users/sagrelto/elandh/home.htm (though this website is not currently accessible from all the online services).

Sandy Strunk, of Lancaster-Lebanon IU 13, has compiled a 13-page directory of listservs directly or indirectly related to adult literacy topics. She has graciously agreed to send Buzz readers a copy. You may contact Sandy at (717) 293-7639 or at PAACE@aol.com.

We warned you this would not be a complete listing of Internet resources but hope this will get you started on your way. Happy net surfing!❖

Going Virtual in Adult Ed

by Sandy Strunk, Lancaster Lebanon I.U. 13 and PAACE ESL Program Division Director

With the support of the Bureau of ABLE, Lancaster Lebanon Intermediate Unit 13, in cooperation with PAACE, is developing an e-mail database that will allow for the rapid dissemination of information to e-mail account holders. Not only will electronic communication save individuals, programs and organizations (such as PAACE) a great deal of money (postage, phone bills, paper duplication, etc.), but it will also allow adult education practitioners in all areas of the state to begin communicating with each other about practice.

If you would like to participate in this network, save a forest or two, and/or become a certified cyberpunk adult educator, send an e-mail message with your name, address and phone number to paace@aol.com. If you're skeptical but would still like information about how to get online, call me (Sandy Strunk) at (717) 293-7639.❖

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DATABASE TRAINING HELD

What do adult educators from community colleges, vo-tech schools, school districts, correctional institutions, literacy councils, workplace sites, Youth Corps, family literacy programs, Head Start, Even Start, JTPA, SPOC, Intermediate Units, and Literacy Corps all have in common? They all sent representatives to the PC database trainings recently conducted by Dr. Bill Murphy of the ABLE Bureau and Mary Scarceli, data analyst for the Center for Literacy in Philadelphia.

Presentations were held across the state on entering student and staff data, setting up and entering sites and classes, and assigning adult students. The automated process will help the ABLE Bureau compile data for required reports and assist local programs in generating reports at frequent intervals for curriculum adjustment, internal evaluation, and accountability

uses for community groups, funders, local sponsors, etc.

At the session held at the West Branch Technology Center in Lock Haven (a satellite unit of Staff Development Region 2), Deb Burrows welcomed an overflow crowd of learners eager for hands-on instruction on Macintosh or PC-compatibles.

Programs with representatives at the training sessions received a copy of the database program on floppy disk and a manual. Technical support will be provided by the Center for Literacy, which developed the program. ❖

INSTITUTE EXAMINED LITERACY RESEARCH

by Priscilla Carman, Penn State Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy

Over 90 ABLE practitioners from a wide variety of adult education programs throughout the state attended the Summer Institute, "Helping Adults Develop Their Literacy Skills: The Latest from Research and Practice," held at the Penn State Scanticon Conference Center in August.

The purpose of the conference was to examine, from both research and practitioner perspectives, the many factors that affect the way adults learn, and to explore their implications from participants' literacy work.

Dr. Nickie Askov and Dr. Fred Scheid, faculty members at the Penn State Summer Institute.

Twenty-two presenters shared their expertise and experience on how to address gender, age, social context, and personal factors (motivation, attitudes, prior schooling) in adult literacy programs.

We wish to thank Dehra Shafer and Debbie Noyes from Continuing and Distance Education at Penn State, Ella Morin and Helen Hall from the ABLE Bureau, and all of the presenters for helping make the Conference a success.

Copies of the Conference Notebook (filled with resources and background information about the topics discussed at the Conference) will be available on loan from AdvancE 1-(800-992-2283) and the WPALRC (1-800-446-5607, ext. 216). For more information contact Priscilla Carman at (814) 863-3777, psc3@psu.edu. ❖

CALL TO ACTION, from p.1

literacy programs in preparing adults for the workplace and in *family literacy*—buzzword #1.

U.S. House of Representatives member Bill Goodling, who represents Adams, Cumberland, and York Counties, described the political milieu which has resulted in two alternatives in federal legislation that may re-establish, substantially alter, or abolish adult basic and literacy education as we know it.

Rep. Goodling, "the father of Even Start" and a friend to adult literacy, emphasized federal-level support for mandates requiring *cooperation*—buzzword #2—between adult education and job training programs.

State government representatives emphasized the "new" relationship between federal funding and programs in Pennsylvania. Nevin Mindlin of the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry chairs the Strategic Planning Process now ongoing in Harrisburg among policy directors of each state department. He emphasized that "the role of the state as an administrative entity of the federal grant is disappearing." He described the planning his group is working with and how *coordination*—buzzword #3—of uses of funding may result in radically different roles for the Pennsylvania Departments of Education, Labor and Industry, and Public Welfare.

Sherri Z. Heller, Deputy Secretary in the Office of Income Maintenance for the Department of Public Welfare, gave specific examples of the challenges welfare recipients will encounter when new federal legislation is enacted. Mandates requiring participation in job-preparation programs and jobs, and the shut-off of funds to adults at the end of five years, are situations now being addressed by Department staff in anticipation of possible new federal requirements.

Gregory White, Director of the Office of Policy of the Pennsylvania Department of Education, wrapped up the discussion on a note of optimism. "The Department is looking at the funding of adult education at the state level," said Mr. White. He also reemphasized the point that

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Current Directions for Section 353

An update from the Bureau of Adult Basic & Literacy Education

To ensure quality education for adult learners enrolled in the more than 200 adult education programs offered across the Commonwealth, **Section 353 Special Demonstration and Staff Development Projects** for fiscal year 1995-96 have as priorities the improvement of the educational programs in the state through research projects, special demonstration projects, and staff development activities. Several statewide initiatives begun last year continue this year, and through more than 50 funded projects, the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education is supporting projects that research and document current exemplary practices, develop model programs that have statewide impact, and provide staff development opportunities to ensure that well-informed and trained practitioners meet the needs of their adult learners.

BUREAU OF ADULT BASIC & LITERACY EDUCATION

able

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STATEWIDE INITIATIVES

Building upon activities begun in 1994-95, **Project EQuAL**, Educational Quality for Adult Literacy, continues with the development of a performance evaluation system. This year EQuAL is providing training and technical assistance to the ten pilot sites from Year 1 of the project and to ten new sites for Year 2. The pilot sites will receive assistance in their data collection and assessment processes, using the information for management of their programs. To complement EQuAL, a project is researching instruments and methodologies for assessing

learners in ABE programs. The scope of the project includes listing instruments, the requirements for their use, information on their reliability and validity, and the ways in which they can be used to guide and evaluate student learning. The project is also assisting in the development and provision of training for the appropriate use of assessment and evaluation tools when working with adult learners, based upon the training being delivered to EQuAL pilot sites.

Student outcomes is the subject of several research projects. The benefits of earning a Commonwealth Diploma through passing the GED battery of tests are being studied in one project. The research addresses income earned, job satisfaction, personal satisfaction, and perceived economic potential. Another project is researching the successful methods by which local providers conduct **follow-up**

activities on students who leave their programs, and compiling a manual of recommended practices. A related project is developing a **cross-training** model to train literacy providers about services/information available from various city/county agencies and to train city/county agencies in adult basic education services.

Staff development initiatives include the implementation in four regional staff development centers of **practitioner inquiry/action research** as a model for staff development. In addition, statewide training

on **learning differences in adults** and the structuring of multi-level classrooms is being offered in a multi-faceted approach: intensive

Over ...

Coordinating resources and efforts in pursuit of shared goals

Continued from other side

training with follow-up to the formal training sessions and ongoing contact during the term of the project. **All nine regional centers** continue to offer staff development activities for adult education practitioners through such opportunities as workshop presentations, tuition reimbursement, and site- and subject-specific technical assistance in requested areas. **Summer Institutes** in

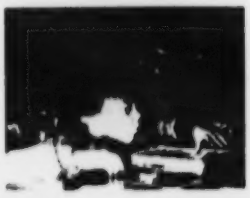
corrections education, adult literacy and technology, and the latest in research on helping adults improve their reading and writing skills were presented during July and August. The Bureau is also supporting the **national conference** of the Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE) in Pittsburgh in May 1996. Attendance and

COABE'96

presentations by Pennsylvania practitioners are encouraged through the Bureau's cosponsorship of this conference.

MODELS

Family Literacy models that encourage the integration and



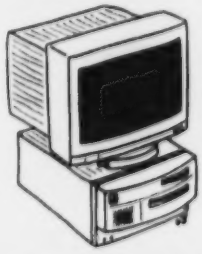
coordination of adult basic education services with Head Start and Even Start providers and at Family Centers are the stated outcomes of several projects. Reflecting the nationwide **School-to-Work** initiative, two projects are

developing models to integrate work-based and school-based learning with adult education programs. All of these models will describe and show the linkages among human-service providers in their local areas, and the models can be replicated by local providers in subsequent program years.

TECHNOLOGY

The use of technology for ABE programs is being studied in several projects. In one, existing online **communication networks** are being utilized by Pennsylvania practitioners for research, study, and networking. In another project, an adult basic education provider is developing an **internal technology plan** for local use that can be adapted and customized by others.

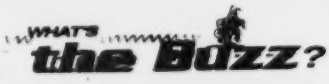
Through the **Data Base** project, the Bureau is providing technical assistance for the maintenance and adaptation of PDE-approved data bases on student characteristics and performance outcomes. Agencies who have signed up for automated



reporting through the data base project will be able to submit program data on disk to the Bureau's research and evaluation section.

PUBLICATIONS

Centralization and unification of publications for adult basic and literacy practitioners is being accomplished through **AXIS**, a project to coordinate communications



among regional staff development centers and local providers in Pennsylvania. **FOCUS**, a summary of

exemplary 353 projects, and **What's the Buzz?**, a general adult basic education newsletter, are again available to practitioners. Ten of Pennsylvania's outstanding adult learners will be honored through the publication of the **Success Stories** booklet that describes their successes in meeting their personal and educational goals.

For more information on these and other Pennsylvania Section 353 projects, please contact Ella M. Morin at the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, (717) 787-5532.

PRACTITIONER INQUIRY: BUILDING COMMUNITIES FOR LEARNING FROM PRACTICE

by Alisa Belzer, Project Director, Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Practitioner Inquiry Network, and Susan Lytle, Director, Adult Literacy Practitioner Inquiry Project

Our work in adult education presents us with new challenges as we strive to meet the needs of learners. Although we draw on previous training and on our life and professional experiences in our efforts to help adult learners meet their goals, most of us have important, pressing questions and concerns for which we can find no concrete or simple answers. We are constantly confronted with questions such as:

- "How can I encourage adults to take more active roles in their learning?"
- "What does it mean when a student stops coming?"
- "What do I do when my students' expectations about learning conflict with my own beliefs about teaching reading and writing?"

Inquiry-based professional development is an innovative and exciting approach to improving practice by providing opportunities for practitioners to form inquiry communities to collaborate in posing key questions and discussing critical issues in adult education from practice.

In inquiry-based professional development, groups of practitioners meet on a regular basis to read, write, and talk about their practice and current research literature, some of it written by practitioner researchers. These activities prompt individual and group analyses and meaningful critique of classroom and program-based needs and issues. They also build a professional community as participants share successes, struggles, and challenges.

The Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Practitioner Inquiry Network (PALPIN) is an extension of the Adult Literacy Practitioner Inquiry Project in Philadelphia, funded since 1991 by the National Center on Adult Literacy at the University of Pennsylvania. PALPIN is a Section 353-funded project designed to build the capacity of practitioners to learn from their own practice, enhance professional connections throughout the state, and make a close link between professional development and program improvement.

This year PALPIN is working intensively in Staff Development Regions 6 and 8 to launch region-wide inquiry groups. On January 24-27, 1996, we will host a special Winter Inquiry institute in Philadelphia for adult literacy practitioners throughout Pennsylvania who would like an intensive opportunity to participate in an inquiry community and get support for using inquiry to develop their own professional practice by working with local colleagues.

Watch for more information on the Winter Inquiry Institute in your RSDC newsletter. For more information contact Alisa Belzer (215) 898-8865, belzera@dolphin.upenn.edu.❖

PDE is looking at ways to increase the role of literacy providers in preparation for adults entering jobs in business and industry (buzzword #4—*job preparation*) and noted providers will be subjected to the scrutiny of "persons who previously did not look at your programs," but will now be demanding *accountability*—buzzword # 5.

Each of the presenters agreed programs will be expected to do more with less money and that the guiding principles behind funding will be *job preparation, family literacy, coordination, cooperation,* and *accountability.*

Videotapes of Call to Action II will be available through the two State Literacy Resource Centers.❖

TOP TITLES FOR NEW READERS ANNOUNCED

The Publishers Liaison Committee of the Public Library Association's Adult Lifelong Learning Section has released its 1995 list of Top Titles for New Readers. Publications listed demonstrate high appeal for adults in terms of content, format, and artwork. Most are written below the grade 8 level (Fry Scale). They contain simple plots, short sentences, and uncomplicated vocabulary.

For more information about the annotated listing of 49 "Distinguished Titles" and "Recommended Series," contact the American Library Association, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611 (800) 545-2433 or see *Public Libraries* magazine, July/August 1995.❖

Our Readers Respond

RE: 'Surplus People'

As a teacher in a shelter for homeless women, I disagree with several statements made by Dr. Gordon Godbey ["In My Opinion," September Buzz]. I teach in an ABE-GED class for Women's Services and I believe the money for our small program is well-spent.

Some of our students are presently enrolled in cosmetology and LPN programs, work as nurses' aides, executive secretary, computer operator, and some attend college.

We also have students on the lower end of the spectrum who fit Dr. Godbey's description of "surplus people,"—although I am uncomfortable with this label. We share his concern about their need to lead productive lives, but acknowledgment of this very real problem does not warrant the demeaning of all Literacy for the Homeless programs.

Although there seems to be minimal economic return from the education of "surplus people," the money spent raising their self-esteem and their literacy levels immediately improves the lives of their children and may pay off economically in the next generation.

Mrs. Libby Wilson, Saegertown

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Newsletter Roundup

In which we note types and contents of professional newsletters to assist Buzz readers in finding their way through the adult education newsletter maze ...

➺ The new president of the International Reading Association (IRA) is Dolores B. Malcolm, coordinator of state and federal programs for the St. Louis Public Schools. In the June/July ***Reading Today,*** she compares desirable literacy-learning environments to an old-fashioned quilting bee:

- Acknowledgment of learning styles is like the individual pieces brought to the quilt.
- A spirit of building community brings people together .
- A cooperative learning experience occurs as Neighbors (volunteers) join in to help.
- There is recognition of prior knowledge and a sense of oral tradition in sharing community news.
- A portfolio of work is displayed for all to see.

IRA's address is 800 Barksdale Rd., PO Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714-8139.

➺ ***Law Matters,*** the "new look" newsletter of the American Bar Association's Commission on Public Understanding About the Law (PUAL), contains a section in Spanish. The Summer 1995 issue featured several articles relevant to adult learners, including advance end-of-life directives and a video available from the ABA addressing problem debt. Contact R. Gary Alexander, Editor, 541 N. Fairbanks Ct., Chicago, IL 60611-3314. Also noted was a new publication dealing with worker rights called ***Luchas Laborales,*** which is done in a comic book format. Contact The Workplace Project, 91 N. Franklin St., Ste. 207, Hempstead, NY 11550.

➺ The July 1995 issue of ***A.L.L. Points Bulletin,*** the newsletter of the U.S. Department of Education's Division of Adult Education and Literacy, debuted ***ESLink,*** which replaces *ESL Notes* and will be a regular feature. An extensive listing of ESL resources mentions a series of briefing papers related to adult education published by the Philadelphia Mayor's Commission on Literacy. In addition to dealing with ESL instruction in speaking, reading, and writing skills, the series has papers on learning differences, learning disabilities, critical-thinking skills, and selecting educational materials. Contact Diane Inverso, Mayor's Commission on Literacy, 1500 Walnut St., 18th Fl., Philadelphia, PA 19102 (215) 685-6602. *A.L.L. Bulletin* is free. Contact Tammy Fortune, Division of Adult Education and Literacy, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202-7240.

➺ The April/May 1995 ***Reading Today*** (now the ***Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy***) discussed the pros and cons of special-needs learners using computer "spellcheck." At the Philadelphia conference of the National Association of Adults with Special Learning Needs (NAASLN) a number of presenters recommended using spellcheck in word-processing applications, and Massachusetts reading and testing specialist Elizabeth Nolan contends that computers enable many learners to compose freely and that some are not going to develop into good spellers whether they use spellcheck or not. The *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy* is published by the International Reading Association, 800 Barksdale Rd., PO Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714-8139.

➺ Missouri's ***Literacy Network News*** outlines "critical characteristics" of a successful ABE director: 1) collaborate with other people and community agencies to recruit students, 2) set clear and measurable objectives and communicate them regularly to staff and providers, 3) involve themselves in the daily operation of the program, 4) create a Total Quality Management philosophy so all staff members view their adult students as valued customers, 5) make decisions with decisiveness, 6) stay current on new ABE materials and technology, and 7) believe in the intelligence and creativity of staff members and ask frequently for their input.

➺ "Technology in the Adult Ed Environment" was the featured article in the March/April 1995 ***GED Items,*** the free newsletter of the General Educational Development Testing Service (GEDTS). Among other points, the article stressed the growing importance of distance learning, interactive multimedia use, and a new look at GED testing and scoring. "As GEDTS phases out hand-scoring, computerized scanners will be the standard tools for scoring answer sheets. In some areas, testing centers are forming consortia for scoring purposes. Across North America, a broad range of licensing candidates take their examinations on computer, entering their answers directly into the computer ... at the end of the test, the score is computed and reported right away. The delivery implications such developments hold for the GED Tests are enormous." Order GED Items from GEDTS, One Dupont Circle, NW, Washington, DC 20036-1163.

➺ A 1994 book by Dr. Gary J. Dean of Indiana University of Pennsylvania and coeditor of the *PAACE Journal of Lifelong Learning*, was reviewed in the May/June ***Adult Learning,*** the newsletter of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE). *Designing Instruction for Adult Learners* was reviewed as "... a new and successful approach to instructional design using careful planning techniques ... provides helpful, instructional design methods and insightful guidelines ... Recommended either as a classroom text or supplementary reference."

People and Programs

◆ **Martin Murphy** has left the **Center for Alternative Learning**, Bryn Mawr, for Long Island, New York, where his bride-to-be is teaching. We'll remember Martin for his efforts at the National Association for Adults With Special Learning Needs Conference last year in Philadelphia.

◆ "Adult Literacy, the Crucial Link," an article by **Don Block**, Executive Director of the **Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council**, appeared in the *Pittsburgh Post Gazette*. The article laments the lack of action by the public and private sectors following release of the National Adult Literacy Survey and takes issue with new federal adult basic and literacy education legislation. The article concludes, "I call on Pittsburghers to include adult literacy in every discussion about educational improvement and to communicate with their elected officials about the importance of adult education."

Don Block

◆ More than 300 students attended the Annual College Conference at Beaver College, Glenside, sponsored by the Philadelphia chapter of **ASPIRA**, a national organization involving Latino youth and parents. ASPIRA/AmeriCorps organized a soup kitchen at the Antonia Pantoja Community Learning Center and The Stetson Middle School (near West Chester) and an anti-violence/anti-crime program along with Cardinal Dougherty (Philadelphia) High School. Twenty-one ASPIRA students passed the GED test and 12 have been placed in full-time employment.

◆ **Anita Cola** is the new coordinator of the **Region 3 Staff Development Center** at Lackawanna Junior College, Scranton. She replaces **Jane Douaihy**, who will be working on graduate studies in special education while continuing to coordinate Adult Basic and Literacy Education programs at LJC.

◆ Staff Development Center coordinators **Rachel Zilcosky**, Region 4, and **Bootsie Barbour**, Region 1, jointly staged a conference for adult educators in Western Pennsylvania. More than 80 participants met at the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center in Gibsonia. **Dr. Richard Gacka**, Director of Adult Education, Northwest Tri-County IU 5 in Edinboro, spoke on assessment, and **Sonny Sloan**, Northwest Regional Advisor, Bureau of ABLE, gave an update on ABLE's program-site evaluations.

◆ **Karen Thome** is the new coordinator of the **Juniata County Library Literacy Program**. Her predecessor, **Kate Zimmerman**, will remain an active tutor and tutor-trainer.

◆ **Dr. Gordon Godbey**, professor emeritus of Penn State University and a pioneer in adult education in Pennsylvania, writes us about a recent priority set by the World Bank to urge developing countries to push forward with basic education. He notes a publication, *Priorities and Strategies for Education*, which refers to a minimum of six years of education as "basic" and that, although 76% of the children in poor nations are receiving this minimum, females constitute a large portion of those who do not. Copies of the report are available from the World Bank, (202) 473-2941.

◆ **Diana Statsman** is celebrating her tenth anniversary as Director of the **Scranton Council for Literacy Advance (SCOLA)**. Diana's efforts have produced funding for SCOLA from a wide variety of community sources, including $30 from a Girl Scout troop and $10,000 from two local companies. Her 1994-95 membership campaign resulted in 171 people donating $11,211. A celebrity member of the SCOLA Board is former Pennsylvania First Lady **Ellen Casey**, whose efforts on behalf of literacy are remembered fondly.

Diana Statsman

◆ **The Center for Literacy** (CFL), Philadelphia, held its annual Corporate/Celebrity Spelling Bee, featuring executives from area businesses and a silent auction of donated items, including tickets to the Philadelphia Symphony and a Tiffany crystal windowpane. CFL, headed by **JoAnn Weinberger**, is the nation's largest community-based adult literacy organization. **Carol Saline**, author of the book *Sisters*, on the New York Times best-seller list for more than 20 weeks, is a CFL board member.

JoAnn Weinberger

◆ **May Alma McConnel**, Project Director at the **Family Literacy Learning Center**, York, reports that 26 families were enrolled in the center's model reading/parenting/computer program, funded by Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) and GTE Corporation. Fifteen families completed the eight sessions, and there is a waiting list for the 1995-96 program, which provides computer-assisted reading instruction to parents and children. Volunteer teachers from the **Dover School District** and eight literacy volunteers developed the curriculum.

NOVEMBER 1995

21 Effective Supervision Workshop. Meadville. 8:30-4. Sponsored by the Pennsylvania Dept. of Community Affairs. Contact: PDCA Municipal Training Division (717) 787-5177.

30-Dec. 3 Tel Ed '95 4th International Conference on Telecommunications in Education. Fort Lauderdale, FL. Contact: International Society for Technology in Education. 1787 Agate St., Eugene. OR 97403-1923. Internet: ISTE@oregon.uoregon.edu.

DECEMBER 1995

7 Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy Forum (PSCAL). Harrisburg. Topic: "Welfare Reform." Presentations by experts, panel, discussion groups. Contact: PSCAL. (800) 870-3858.

7 Denny Taylor, author of *Family Literacy* and *Growing Up Literate*. ALPIP Local Network. Stiteler Hall Lounge. Univ. of Pennsylvania. Philadelphia. 7-9 p.m. Contact/RSVP: (215) 898-8865.

7-9 1995 International Conference on Lifelong Learning. San Antonio. TX.

14 Videoconference: "Families and Literacy: Making Sense of the Issues." 1-3 p.m. Contact: your Regional Staff Development Center (RSDC) or Chris Kemp at the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center. (800) 446-5607, ext. 216.

It's a Date!

JANUARY 1996

8 ESL Training Teleconference: "I am, you are, we is: A Look at Teaching Grammar in Adult ESL Classes." Contact: Paula Smith. Region 6 RSDC. (717) 232-0568.

18-20 Educational Computer Conferences' Annual National Conference. San Francisco. Theme: "Technology, Reading & Learning Difficulties." Contact: Educational Computer Conferences, 1070 Crows Nest Way, Richmond, CA 94803.

24-27 Adult Literacy Practitioner Inquiry Project Inquiry Institute. Philadelphia. Adult literacy practitioners interested in an intensive opportunity to participate in an inquiry community are encouraged to apply. Stipends and travel reimbursements are available. Contact: Alisa Belzer, (215) 898-8865. belzera@dolphin.upenn.edu.

Continuing Education Conference To Be in Hershey

The Continuing Higher Education Division of the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE) will join with the Continuing Education Association and the Association of Continuing Higher Education to present a one-day conference in Hershey on February 9, 1996.

The conference theme is "The Displaced Professional: Higher Education's Response." The keynoter is Robert T. Jones from the National Alliance of Business. Panels will deal with Best Practices, Funding, Corporate Involvement, and Support Systems. On the preceding day (February 8) the Division will hold its annual reception to recognize Higher Education's outstanding students. For more information contact Cheryl Boyer, (717) 232-6400.

World Literacy Conference Planned for Philadelphia

"Improving Literacy, Changing Lives: Innovations and Interconnections for Development" is the title of the March 12-15, 1996, World Literacy Conference in Philadelphia, sponsored by the International Literacy Institute.

Topics will include professional development, planning and policy development, curriculum development, politics and policy dimensions, evaluation and assessment, distance education, and technology.

For information, contact the World Conference on Literacy, International Literacy Institute, University of Pennsylvania, 3910 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104-3111.

FEBRUARY 1996

(Note: The annual PAACE Midwinter Adult Education Conference will be postponed this year to be held in conjunction with the Commission on Adult Basic Education—COABE National Conference to be held in Pittsburgh on May 16-18.)

2-4 North American Conference on Adolescent and Adult Literacy. Washington, DC. Contact: International Reading Association. 800 Barksdale Rd., Newark, DE 19714. (800) 3367323, ext. 216.

8 PAACE Continuing Higher Education Division Annual Reception to honor Higher Education's Outstanding Students. Hershey. Contact: Phoebe Novakovic. (610) 525-6325.

9 PAACE Continuing Higher Education Division Midwinter Conference. Hershey. Contact: Cheryl Boyer, Temple University-Harrisburg, 223 Walnut St., Harrisburg, PA 17101. (717) 232-6400.

WHAT'S the Buzz?

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Vol. 15, No. 3
JANUARY 1996

WHAT'S the Buzz?

PENNSYLVANIA ADULT EDUCATION'S PROFESSIONAL NEWSLETTER

SPECIAL ISSUE ON FAMILY LITERACY!

JANUARY HIGHLIGHTS: Family Literacy Planning 2 From the Bureau 3 Wagner on Literacy 4 COABE Update 5 AdvancE Advances 5 Family Reading Tips 5 Even Start 6 Math & Grammar Corners 7 Newsletter Roundup 8 People & Programs 9 It's a Date 10

Pennsylvania's First Lady Visits Chester County Even Start

by Linda M. Rigler, Chester Co. Even Start Coordinator

Michele Ridge made her mark on this model intergenerational program.

"Parents benefit from literacy programs by learning how to spend quality time with their children, encourage lifelong learning, and set high standards for their achievement. Literacy is the most important survival skill individuals can have," said Pennsylvania First Lady Michele Ridge during her visit in December to the Chester County Even Start Program in Kennett Square.

Mrs. Ridge praised the federally funded family literacy program as she observed activity in a Parent and Child Together (PACT) program, which is a blend of early childhood education, parenting education, and adult basic education. She noted the importance of working with the entire family to effectuate changes in family cycles of low literacy and illiteracy.

During her visit families in the program were treated to a read-aloud by Mrs. Ridge, who formerly was a librarian for 20 years and also served as Executive Director of the Erie County Library System. She chose the book *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle and gave an effective, animated reading followed by the children retelling the story with the assistance of a caterpillar stocking puppet.

The Chester County Even Start Program is partnered with the Adult Literacy Program, which provides adult education in a tutorial setting to approximately 25% of the adults enrolled in the Even Start Program. The Adult Literacy Program also provides referrals to the Even Start Program.

Other groups involved in providing adult education services to Even Start and other adults in Chester County include La Comunidad Hispana, which provides ESL and GED Classes; the Migrant Ministry, which provides ESL classes; and Head Start and Migrant Head Start, which provide preschool services. Even Start also operates an extended-day kindergarten program. Community groups involved with the family literacy effort include the Kennett Consolidated School District, Kennett Rotary Club, Kennett Newcomers Club, Kennett Run Charities, Girl Scout Troop 700, the American Mushroom Institute, Immaculata College, the Chester County Intermediate Unit, church groups, and various individuals.

Michele Ridge and state Rep. Joseph Pitts (Chester County) at the Chester County Even Start program

"What makes this program so effective is the unique collaboration with many grassroots organizations to develop family literacy services tailored to individual community needs," said Mrs. Ridge.

The Chester County Even Start Program emphasizes per-

Continued on p.2

FAMILY LITERACY CAN GIVE ADULT EDUCATION LEGITIMACY

One of the greatest problems being encountered by adult education on the national, state, and local levels is "Where does it fit?"

Some legislators want adult education to be included as part of welfare reform. Others feel state governors are in the best position to allocate funds to adult education program areas where the opportunity exists for the greatest payoff.

Many local school districts have traditionally looked upon

Continued on p.2

First Lady, from p.1

sonal responsibility and community involvement by requiring that families track their adult education hours and parenting education/PACT hours. They are also required to involve their families in at least one community service project each year.

By utilizing the inherent strengths of both the family and the local community, the Chester County Even Start Literacy Program intends to change an intergenerational cycle of low literacy to an intergenerational cycle of literacy for many families.❖

what's the Buzz?

What's the Buzz?, Pennsylvania Adult Education's Professional Newsletter is published five times in 1995-96 by Adult Education Linkage Services, Box 214, Troy, PA 16947, under partial funding provided through the Pennsylvania Department of Education from the U.S. Adult Education Act, Section 353. It is distributed without charge to practitioners of adult basic and literacy education in Pennsylvania and no endorsement of newsletter contents by PDE nor USDOE should be inferred.

Editor: Dave Fluke
Copy & Production: Tana Reiff
Editorial Board: Bootsie Barbour, Ella Morin, Tana Reiff

This publication is available in alternative media on request.

Legitimacy, from p.1

adult education as a program to be tolerated as long as it doesn't use local money, but not really as a part of the educational responsibility of the district.

For years some segments of the education community have realized the importance of parental involvement in a child's education as a factor for school success. Such terms as "family values," "school partnerships," and "meeting local needs" are in vogue today and through family literacy concepts adult educators can gain a legitimacy certainly deserved but previously ignored.

Strong families, strong schools. According to the National Center for Family Literacy, children's success in school can be linked to reading to children and listening to them. Parents may not know how important it is that they interact with their children by reading to them. They also may lack the skills needed to read to their children with confidence. Many parents are unaware of their roles as teachers of their children. They need both concrete instruction in methods for working with their children at home and also need to improve their own literacy skills. Family literacy programs help them understand this value and help them acquire the skills to read confidently. This is the role of family literacy, which must be communicated to the legislators, funders, communities and educational administrators on all levels.

In family literacy, parents demonstrate to their children that they feel education is important. They do this by working to upgrade their own basic skills by attending classes in ABE, GED, ESL and literacy.

Schools with strong family literacy programs have experienced a marked increase in volunteers, greater attendance at school board meetings, greater interest in what is going on in their children's schools, and a decrease in problems with behavior and attitude.

It is these benefits to parents, students, and "the system" that adult educators must identify and communicate to legislators and government and local school officials. Although family literacy via parental involvement has been around for decades, most persons in authority have had little experience with structured adult education family literacy programs. As a result they find it difficult to understand what the discipline is all about and "how it fits."❖

Some information in this article is from NCLE Notes, *Vol. 4, #2, Nat'l. Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Ed., 1118 22nd St., NW, Washington, DC and the* NCFL Newsletter, *Vol. 6, #4, Nat'l. Center for Family Literacy, Waterfront Plaza, Ste. 200, 325 W. Main St., Louisville, KY 40202-4251.*

Effective Family Literacy Programs Based on Planning

Family literacy programs are found in a variety of settings: Head Start and Even Start centers, adult learning centers, school district and intermediate unit-based programs, literacy and library programs, community agencies, etc.

The International Reading Association (IRA), in the second of a series of articles on family literacy appearing in *Reading Today*, suggests some steps in the planning process for a successful family literacy program:

- **Organize a planning committee and generate support. School personnel, key parents, community group representatives, etc. should all provide collaboration at the initial planning stage.**
- **Survey needs and resources. A careful assessment of strengths and weaknesses of the school community is the first step to refining goals, identifying a target population, and adapting a program model.**
- **Provide staff development. Even enthusiastic volunteers need orientation and support. Family literacy programs involve a special element since they require teachers to assume a new role as a family educator.**
- **Establish an evaluation plan. Evaluation can support program development, monitor progress toward program goals, and provide data for administrative accountability or fundraising purposes.**
- **Provide administrative support. Providing time for planning, evaluation and staff development. Facilitating access to supplies. Recognizing teacher efforts and participating in program activities.**
- **Set up methods for recruitment and outreach. Publicize the program. Actively recruit parents. Provide child care and transportation if possible.**
- **Provide recognition. Recognize adult participants for fostering the literacy of their children and for their own literacy accomplishments.**

You may contact IRA at 800 Barksdale Rd., P.O. Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714-8139.❖

2

MULTICULTURAL BOOKS ABOUT FAMILIES

The Family Literacy Commission of the International Reading Association (IRA) has released a series of reports celebrating "The Year of the Family." The final report focuses on books about "traditional" families with stories showing how complicated problems can be solved through communication, concern for each other's feelings, and love. In some cases the books illustrate how literacy is shared in families' daily lives.

Books About Families, for Everyone:

The Terrible Thing That Happened at Our House, by M. Blaine; Scholastic, 1975. 29pp., $3.95; grades K-3.

Dear Annie, J. Caseley; Greenwillow Books, 1991, 29pp.; $13.95; grades K-2.

Tight Times, B.S. Hazen; Puffin, 1979; 28pp., $3.95; Grade K-6.

Fix-It, D. McPhail, Dutton, 1984; 20pp.; $3.95; grades K-3.

Books About African-American Families:

Just Us Women, J. Caines; Harper and Row, 1982; 32pp.; $4.95; grades K-6.

Families: Poems Celebrating the Afican-American Experience, D. and M. Strickland; Boyds Mills Press; 1994; 32pp.; $14.95; grades K-3.

Books About Asian Families:

Tales from Cold Mountain: Stories of the Chinese in the New World, P. Yee; Macmillan, 1989; 64pp.; $14.95; grades 3 and up.

Lon Po Po: A Red Riding Hood Story From China, E. Young; Philomel, 1989; 30pp.; $14.95; grades K-6.

Books About Latino Families:

On the Pampas, M.C. Brusca; Holt, 1991; 40pp.; $4.95; grades 1-4.

Grandma's Helper, L. Meyer; Foresman, 1993; 24pp.; $21.95; grades K-2.

For more information, including other recommended books, contact IRA, 800 Barksdale Rd., PO Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714-8139.❖

PCN OFFERS FREE LITERACY PROGRAMMING

The Pennsylvania Cable Network (PCN) offers a wide variety of informative television programming and has, for many years, made available literacy training, college telecourses, and Pennsylvania public-affairs broadcasts of interest to adult learners and literacy professionals. Cable outlets are available throughout the state. PCN also makes available a home page on the World Wide Web that provides information about programming, names and addresses of Pennsylvania legislators, and other public-service information. The URL is http://www.pcntv.com.❖

1996-97 APPLICATION DATES SET

Deadline dates for applications for funding for 1996-97 adult education programs in Pennsylvania have been announced by the ABLE Bureau and a series of statewide presentations by the Bureau staff has been planned to bring programs up-to-date with changes in application and fiscal reporting procedures.

The announcement of "Availability of Funds" for each type of program will be published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* in January and a notification will be sent to each agency. Programs currently conducting Section 322, Pennsylvania Literacy Corps, and/or Act 143 programs will also receive a copy of application guidelines and forms. Application due dates are:

Section 353 Letter of Intent	January 29, 1996
Federal Section 353	March 8, 1996
State Act 143	March 15, 1996
Federal Section 322	March 29, 1996
PA Literacy Corps	April 12, 1996

Bureau Administrative Workshops Scheduled

- **SAEGERTOWN, January 30, 10:00 a.m., Saegertown High School (located behind elementary school); Administration rooms. Saegertown exit off I-79, Rte 198, on right (East).**
- **PITTSBURGH, January 31, 10:00 a.m., Bidwell Training Center, 1815 Metropolitan Street, Auditorium.**
- **ALTOONA, February 1, 9:30 a.m., Altoona Area High School Board Room, B-229 (2nd floor), B Building, 6th Ave. at 15th Street.**
- **HARRISBURG, February 6, 10:00 a.m. Harrisburg Area Community College, One HACC Drive, Alumni Lounge (Cooper 204).**
- **SCRANTON, February 7, 10:00 a.m. Marywood College, 2300 Adams Street, Nazareth Hall Student Center, Crystal Room.**
- **PHILADELPHIA, February 8, 10:00 a.m. Community College of Philadelphia, (Near 17th and Spring Garden, across from Bonnell Building). Winet Student Life Center—Parking available in garage adjacent to Winet Building.**
- **RADNOR, February 9, 10:00 a.m. Cabrini College, 610 King of Prussia Road, Widener Center Lecture Hall.**

ABLE ANNUAL REPORT AVAILABLE

Dr. William Murphy, Research Associate for the ABLE Bureau, has announced the *Annual Report of Adult Basic and Literacy Programs in Pennsylvania* is now available for FY 1993-94. The report contains summary staff and student statistics as well as summaries for individual programs. Buzz readers desiring a copy should contact Dr. Murphy or Caryn Watson at (717) 783-4333.❖

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

In My Opinion ...

TO READ OR NOT TO READ: THE ENDURING QUESTION OF LOW ADULT LITERACY IN AMERICA

A commentary by Dr. Daniel A. Wagner

In 1990, America's governors reached a historic consensus on a set of national educational goals as targets for the year 2000. Among these national goals was that " ... every adult American shall be literate." While this goal was widely applauded by those in the literacy community, much more national attention (and nearly 15 times the budgetary resources) has been devoted to the other goals that focus almost exclusively on improving the formal K-12 school system.

The lack of attention to adult literacy needs is shocking when we consider that the estimated population of adults in need of retraining, upskilling, or developing even the most basic literacy skills is estimated to be about the same as that of the entire national school-age population, about 40-50 million people.

In the 1960s, the United States was widely considered to be one of the most literate countries in the world, with a United Nations-listed "literacy rate" of nearly 99 percent. Yet in 1993, the first report from the federally funded National Adult Literacy Survey painted a different picture. The so-called good news was that nearly 95 percent of adult Americans could read at a 4th-grade level or better. The bad news was that nearly half of all adult Americans scored in the lowest two levels of literacy—levels that the National Education Goals Panel has stated are well below what American workers need to be competitive in the global economy.

Among urban minority groups fewer than 50 percent of the children complete 10th grade. Low achievement in schools and early dropping out, along with the increased flow of poorly educated immigrants, fill the rolls of low-literacy American adults at least as fast as adult education programs try to empty them. In other words, low literacy must now be seen as a chronic feature of the American educational landscape with all the well-known statistical relationships with increased school failure, low worker productivity, crime, and dependence on welfare.

As in the other educational sectors, adult literacy educators feel underfunded, undersupported, and often misunderstood by government agencies. At the same time, such agencies and the public wring their hands at this "problem" which will simply not go away. Yet, the last several years have yielded new approaches to this once intractable problem.

Research has now conclusively demonstrated that the income of American adults goes up substantially for each level of literacy attained; and furthermore that income differences between ethnic and racial groups tend to disappear when literacy and education factors are held constant. We now know that well-designed and targeted adult literacy programs can help participants achieve higher rates of employment, wages, and earnings and decrease their reliance on public assistance.

We also know that effective literacy teaching requires matching appropriate instructional techniques with the different learning styles and needs of adult students, and, where possible, that basic-skills instruction should be oriented toward workplace literacy needs. Thus, state and federal resources should be shifted to incorporate more extensive diagnostic testing in literacy and basic skills programs, and learners should be identified according to instructionally relevant variables, rather than the still common "one size fits all" approach. Furthermore, recent studies have shown that employer incentives, such as increased pay for developing literacy skills, can lead to greater participation in literacy education programs, increased skills and earnings, and even improved company productivity.

Each year federal, state, and local agencies serve approximately 1.8 million English-as-a-second-language adults, about half the total participation in adult literacy education in the United States. Yet, ESL instructional programs are often poorly tailored to learner profiles and culture-specific interests. Family literacy programs can be more attractive than regular adult basic education programs for many low-income families, in part because they provide services such as child care; nonetheless, more specialized training is required for family literacy instructors who will be involved with teaching both young children and adults.

One major obstacle to change in adult literacy instruction is that the large majority of the teaching staff (87 percent in 1993) is part-time (often volunteers with high turnover); we need to invert this proportion and provide enhanced professional-development opportunities.

Finally, technology holds enormous promise for the future. The 1993 report from the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment, "Adult Literacy and New Technologies," found that technology already exists in businesses, homes, schools, colleges, and libraries that could easily be shared or used in partnership with adult literacy programs, but rarely is.

America's literacy problems and needs are growing, not declining. While government investment in adult education climbed in the last decade, current federal legislative proposals are scheduled to cut back on adult literacy education just when the field is beginning to reinvigorate itself through innovation.

Given its economic and social importance—and its impact in terms of the effect parents' education has on children's learning in schools—the time has come to help more adults to read, and to be readers. ❖

Dr. Daniel A. Wagner is the director of the National Center on Adult Literacy and a professor of education at the University of Pennsylvania. The research on which this article is based is from an NCAL report titled "Adult Literacy: The Next Generation." This "In My Opinion" article is excerpted, with the author's permission, from an article by Dr. Wagner which appeared in the October 25, 1995 issue of Education Week.

PENNSYLVANIA EVEN START LOOKS AT WHAT IT HAS ACCOMPLISHED

by Don Paquette, Coordinator, Even Start Family Literacy Program, Pennsylvania Department of Education

Pennsylvania's Even Start Program is a family-focused literacy program intended to improve the educational opportunities of the State's children and adults by integrating early childhood education and adult education for parents into a unified program. By educating parents and children together, the program is enabling families to break the cycle of poverty and illiteracy through an intergenerational approach.

Until the passage of federal legislation funding Even Start and Head Start programs, adult educators throughout Pennsylvania wrestled with the frustration of working with parents in adult basic and family literacy programs but, because of funding guidelines, not being able to provide services to the children of these parents.

Even Start legislation requires collaboration with adult and early childhood education serving similar populations. Presently the Even Start grantees throughout the state each have services to parents in adult literacy, 0-4; adult basic education, 4-8; GED preparation, 9-12; and English as a second language. Services are coordinated through a series of "Collaborative Partners" ranging from adult literacy programs to school districts to community-based organizations. In 1994-95 services were provided to 1,645 families, which included 1,775 adults and 2,832 children. Most sites are filled to capacity and have waiting lists of families wishing to enroll in Even Start programs.

The Even Start statute contains an annual evaluation requirement. Each project is required to participate in the national evaluation *and* conduct a local evaluation. The function of the local evaluation is to measure the program's objectives related to: services to families most in need; adult education/literacy services; parent-child interactions and parenting education home visiting; children's readiness for school; collaboration with related service providers; and staff development.

Three new programs have been funded recently: Community Services for Children in Bethlehem with the Allentown School District as the Collaborative Partner; the Harrisburg School District with the Tri-County OIC as Partner; and the Tuscarora Intermediate Unit, Snyder-Union-Mifflin Child Development, Inc. as Partner. Pennsylvania now operates 21 projects and provides Even Start services within 59 school districts.

Comments or questions about Even Start and/or local evaluation findings should be addressed to me at (717) 772-2813 or to local Even Start project directors. ❖

In Allentown ...

FAMILY LITERACY FOR YOUNG MOTHERS

The Private Industry Council (PIC) in Allentown provides job placement and employment opportunities, training, and related services to unemployed residents of Lehigh and Northampton Counties. The PIC-sponsored Expectant and Parenting Youth Program (EPYP) helps young mothers recognize the importance of education and planning so they can take pride in becoming valued members of the community and can serve as role models and provide learning assistance to their children.

Since 1985 the program has provided academic instruction, parenting education, health services, life-skills training, and job preparation to over 500 young mothers of the Lehigh Valley. In 1989 EPYP was selected as one of 15 national demonstration sites for a study conducted by the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.

Community involvement in the program is enhanced by field trips into the community, the use of tutor-volunteers from local businesses and neighborhoods, and close contacts with other community agencies, including hospital clinics, health bureaus, visiting nurse associations, and other non-profit agencies such as Head Start, a local home for the elderly, and the Community Action Committee of the Lehigh Valley. ❖

In Reading ...

PROGRAM RECEIVES NATIONAL VALIDATION

The National Center on Family Literacy (NCFL) recently began a process of recognizing exemplary family literacy programs with a validation award. In 1994-95 eleven family literacy programs throughout the nation applied for these awards which involve a rigorous and lengthy process including a site visit and external review.

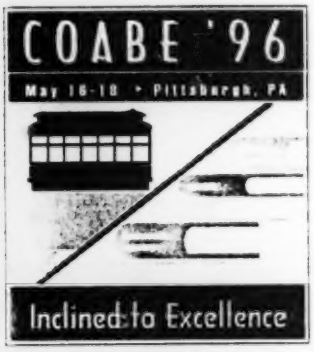
Of the eleven applicants, two programs—one in Texas and one in Massachusetts—were selected as finalists of promising practices awards. Only one program was selected for NCFL validation for its overall effectiveness as a center-based program model—the Reading, Pennsylvania Even Start Program.

In 1993 the Reading Even Start Program was the first Even Start program nationally to receive recognition as a Chapter I "Unusually Successful Program," and since its inception in 1989, Reading Even Start Programs have served 271 families, 274 adults, and 503 children with program goals to help parents demonstrate and increase their own academic skills and competencies while becoming effective partners in their children's development.

Congratulations to Director Barbara Wolf Gill and her staff for an exemplary, nationally recognized family literacy effort. ❖

COABE '96 IS ALMOST HERE

Time is flying! The deadline for presentation proposals for the Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE) national conference is January 19, 1996. Proposals are arriving from all over the country and the Program Committee will review them by February 29, 1996. Contact Dr. G. Michael Vavrek at (717) 389-4420 or vavr@husky.bloomu.edu to obtain a Presentation Proposal and Presentation Abstract form.



Pennsylvania proud! *Be part of a memorable national event that showcases Pennsylvania as a leader. "Inclined to Excellence" in providing services to adult learners, their families and communities.* Pre-conference institutes scheduled May 14 and 15 at the Doubletree Hotel in downtown Pittsburgh include: Even Start, Health and Literacy, Public Education Policy, Learning Differences, and Cultural Diversity. The Opening General Session begins at 10 a.m. Thursday, May 16, followed by the Grand Opening of Exhibits in the adjacent David L. Lawrence Convention Center exhibit area. Participants will choose from 200 sessions of panel discussions, presentations, and roundtables before the conference ends at 12:30 on Saturday, May 18.

You do have a friend in Pennsylvania. *Enjoy special events that highlight our entertainment traditions and reputation for good times* Do not miss the Gateway Clipper Cruise and Dance, Rosebud's variety show, the tour of the facilities at Station Square, the "Incline" or the breathtaking view from Mount Washington.

The Keynote: Dr. Frederick Breitenfeld, Jr. will present the Keynote Address, "Educating in a Tornado of Change." Dr. Breitenfeld is the President and Chief Executive Officer of WHYY, Inc., an independent nonprofit corporation operating TV12 and 91 FM, public television and radio stations in the Delaware Valley. His message: telecommunications technology is forcing dynamic and dizzying shifts on our lives, and the ability to cope is especially needed among adult educators, to whom so many turn for help and answers. The address will focus on breaking through the traditional resistance to change in teaching and learning.

Registration: Conference registration forms will be mailed in late January. Forms include conference schedule, costs, hotel accommodations, travel arrangements, and special events.

Carpe Diem! The Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE)and Pennsylvania Association of Adult and Continuing Education (PAACE) are encouraging adult educators in Pennsylvania to attend this national event by providing a limited amount of registration reimbursement through the nine Regional Staff Development Centers. Contact your RSDC for reimbursement details and act quickly: funds are limited and the application deadline, March 22, will be here before we know it.

As winter flees by, watch the mail for your registration form, contact your Regional Staff Development Center for reimbursement procedures and, with the coming of spring, be "Inclined to Excellence" at COABE, May 16-18 in Pittsburgh.❖

RESOURCE CENTER COMPLETES MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS

The AdvancE State Literacy Resource Center has made several improvements in its collection in the last several months. First, the entire Section 310/353 collection has been professionally catalogued and will be accessible through the LUIS State Library online system. The subject matter portion of the shelf collection was included in the cataloguing. Second, the collection has been moved into expanded facilities on the same floor with work space, computers, and a conference room.

In cooperation with the Distance Learning/Technology Center, a downlink site for teleconferences, videoconferencing, and other interactive devices provides structured opportunities for interagency cooperation on key adult education issues, policies, and programs. AdvancE is an excellent choice for on-site visits by practitioners or for having expert selections of resources for adult basic and literacy education. Contact AdvancE by calling (800) 992-2283 or TDD at (717) 783-8445.❖

10 Tips to Make Family Reading Fun!

1. Play a card or board game providing a ready-made reading opportunity; reading the directions and game components with the child helps to develop worthwhile skills.

2. When it's time to eat out, read menus together.

3. Use the telephone book to help children look up names, numbers and addresses.

4. Make a chart of each child's responsibilities and daily activities; have the child read and check off each activity as it is done.

5. Teach your child to read the TV listings.

6. Sit down with your child to read stories of interest in your local newspaper and classroom magazines from school.

7. Suggest a memory scrapbook with cards, mementos, etc.

8. If your child is interested in a pet, suggest reading together about the animal; read directions on pet food and pet care containers.

9. Establish a daily reading habit by reading the calendar together; personalize it with family birthdays, special events, etc.

10. Share a good story, cartoon, etc. There's no better reason for reading together than reading for fun!

From Reading Today *(April/May 1995), IRA, 800 Barksdale Rd., Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714-8139.*

Hookt on Fonix

Seen on a T-shirt at a recent literacy workshop:
"Hookt on Fonix rilly workt fer Mee!"

Math Corner +%>x=

Using the Place Value Grid

After seeing Abbei Brawley's "Grammar Corner," some of our readers requested the same idea for math. The following was excerpted from a Section 353 project, "An In-Service Math Instruction Program for Tutors," by Ellen McDevitt. The entire project is available on free loan from either of the State Adult Literacy Resource Centers—AdvancE, (800) 992-2283, or WPALRC, (800) 446-5607, ext. 216.

The Place Value Grid is used with toothpicks or pennies and dimes to illustrate the concept of place value. Explain that each column can contain only nine ones in the first column on the right, nine groups of ten in the next column, etc. Begin by having the student count out nine toothpicks and place them one at a time in the ones column. When you get to ten toothpicks, you have to gather up the first nine and remove them from the ones column, add the tenth toothpick to the original nine, bind them with a rubber band, and place the group of ten in the tens column. This becomes one group of ten.

Explain the number 10 says that there are no ones, but there is one group of 10. Show the concept on the grid until your student grasps what place value means.

Continue bundling toothpicks in groups of ten until you have nine groups of ten in the column and you are ready to add a tenth group.❖

A GRAMMER CORNER

A Look at Apostrophes

by Abbei Brawley
Southwest Regional Advisor, Bureau of ABLE

An apostrophe is a little upside-down quotation mark or, more simply put, a comma used up above its usual spot. There seems to be some confusion as to when an apostrophe should be used.

An apostrophe is used in three instances:

1. To show the omission of letters or numerals, e.g.:
   • don't • isn't • aren't • Class of '66 • the '50's
2. To form the plurals of letters, numerals, or words, e.g.:
   • When I was in my 20's ... (Some publications' style, including that of the Buzz, is to use no apostrophe in plural numerals.)
   • How many e's are in Tennessee?
   • Some people use a lot of I mean's when they speak.
3. To form possessive nouns (*not* plurals), e.g.:
   • Antonio's motorcycle • Maria's Restaurant • women's blouses

Notes:

- For possession on plurals ending in *s*, add *only* the apostrophe. e.g. Boys' Club (meaning plural; if *one* boy possessed his own club, for example, it would then be Boy's Club)
- For possession in hyphenated words/compound nouns, add 's to the last word, e.g.:
  • mother-in-law's house
  • Department of Education's guidelines
- For separate and joint possession/ownership, e.g.:
  • Brandon and Tracey's treehouse (joint possession) ❖

Editor's note: Readers with specific grammar concerns should contact Ms. Brawley at (717) 787-6344.

ALLEGHENY I.U. HOSTS FAMILY LITERACY DAY

by Ron Fronzaglio, Director, Allegheny I.U. Adult Education Programs, Pittsburgh

A November day of activities celebrating family literacy was recently hosted by the Allegheny IU in collaboration with the Goodwill Literacy Initiative and the Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council. The activity saw representatives of the Departments of Education, Labor, Welfare and Health (Healthy Start, Inc.) come together with parent/adult learners and family literacy program providers to learn and share information about material resources, activities, and parenting skills.

The day's activities included workshops on emergent literacy and parenting skills with a focus on setting healthy and helpful limits for children, discipline, cultural diversity in literature, affordable activities for parents and children in the home, story telling, and "Hug Therapy."

Collaboration was the guiding force behind the logistics of the day's activities with a talent pool of presenters from the Allegheny IU, Carlow College, Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh, the Goodwill Literacy initiative, parents from the Clairton Even Start Center and other community organizations, and a planning committee of parents and family literacy professionals.

Books and other products given as raffle prizes were donated by the Allegheny IU, Borders Book Shop, Bookends, the Carnegie Science Center, the Civic Light Opera, the Even Start Collaborative, Goodwill Literacy Initiative, Phipps Conservatory, Pittsburgh Children's Museum, Pittsburgh Symphony, the Pittsburgh Zoo, and the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center. Contributions were also received from a number of area businesses.

Parent/adult learners had a strong involvement in the day's planning and activities and some of the parents led a workshop on "Hands-on Activities for Children."

As Master of Ceremonies I observed that adult learners in the various programs are well aware of the impact that adult educators, parent educators, home visitors and advisors have on their lives. They appreciate the change in their children's academic performance. It is very gratifying and heartwarming to hear parent/adult learners willingly express their appreciation of the way family literacy improves their lives.❖

Newsletter Roundup

In which we note types and contents of professional newsletters to assist Buzz readers in finding their way through the adult education newsletter maze ...

➺ ***A.L.L. Points Bulletin*** from the U.S Department of Education's Division of Adult Education and Literacy (September 1995) reviews the activities at the 1995 Annual Conference of State Directors of Adult Education, State Literacy Center Coordinators, and Governors' Liaisons held July 16-19 in Washington, DC. The theme of the Conference was "Impact of Adult Education and Literacy Programs" and the keynote address was by Thomas Sticht, president of Applied Behavioral and Cognitive Science, Inc. Sticht discussed ways to redirect federal monies spent on adult education to get twice or even three times the education or employment outcomes from programs by investing in the intergenerational transfer of cognitive skills and investing in functional-context education. Copies of Dr. Sticht's paper are available from the Division Clearinghouse, 600 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, DC 20202. To receive a free subscription to the A.L.L. Points Bulletin, write the Office of Vocational and Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202.

➺ **Virginia's adult education newsletter** (October, 1995) contains two articles of interest to ESL instructors. "An Approach to Teaching Multi-level ESL" relates how the use of a variety of materials selected on the basis of student needs (recipes, information about things children were learning in school, historical poems, etc.) resulted in cross-cultural exchanges, an improvement of the flow of spoken English, and an opportunity for ESL students to explore options and utilize their own learning styles. The second ESL article is by an instructor who found using folksinging provides an active, participatory, and inclusive context for language learning that will carry on outside the classroom.

➺ ***Update*** is the newsletter covering activities of the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL). The October, 1995 issue mentions a new program designed to promote collaborative efforts for family literacy at the state level. Seven states, including Pennsylvania, will receive technical assistance from NCFL and a Washington, DC-based research and evaluation firm with the involvement of state Even Start, adult education, and other programs in designing and developing strategic alliances for family literacy. Visits from a technical assistance team were scheduled to start this fall. NCFL's address is Waterfront Plaza, Ste. 200, 325 W. Main St., Louisville, KY 40202.

➺ There is still much concern about the phonics products being strongly marketed throughout the country, and the October/November issue of ***Reading Today*** from the International Reading Association (IRA) notes the Association is launching a research project in this area to establish a set of criteria that parents and teachers can use for judging and evaluating phonics kits. For more information contact IRA at 800 Barksdale Rd., PO Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714.

➺ A strong family is the key to solving social problems, says Roger Wilkins, Professor of History at George Mason University, in an article appearing in ***Multicultural Messenger*** (November, 1995). He writes that, "No social program in the world can do for society what families can do. What do you need for there to be a strong family? There needs to be at least one parent employed at a decent job, doing something he or she can be proud of. Without that kind of employment, the breadwinner's self-esteem goes down and the relationship between family members becomes strained no matter what race they are."

In the same issue Katherine S. Newman, Professor of Anthropology at Columbia University, notes some of the results of her two-year field research in an inner-city labor market to discover how people find jobs in a depressed area and how much competition exists.

Her findings show that even in the most economically depressed inner cities, working for a living remains a key norm. In Central Harlem she found at least 67% of households include at least one full-time worker.

Dr. Newman says that because public-sector jobs are getting scarcer and many manufacturing jobs have disappeared, middle-class relatives and friends cannot do much to help younger ones move up in the world as they used to be able to do.

According to Dr. Newman, African Americans are finding a particularly difficult time because employers believe that immigrants from poor countries are better candidates for low-wage jobs.

Multicultural Messenger is published ten times per year. Subscriptions are $40 to The People Publishing Group, P.O. Box 70, Rochelle Park, NJ 07662.

➺ Christine Gallahar, a Florida librarian, contends in an article in ***The Ladder*** that there are growing numbers of functional illiterates who are unable to function at a level required to contribute to and benefit in society and from employment.

Ms. Gallahar says illiterates were always at a disadvantage, but their plight has worsened in contemporary times, resulting in increased poverty, short life expectancy, malnutrition, infant mortality, exclusion from government services, and inequality before the law. According to the author, "Illiteracy seems to have chains that link economic, social and cultural factors that continue to be manifested in inadequate schooling, lack of vocational skills, health problems and large family size."

The Ladder is the newsletter of Push Literacy Action Now (PLAN) in Washington, DC. For a subscription write 1332 G St., SE, Washington, DC 20003. ❖

People and Programs

◆ The Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington, DC, has distributed an *ERIC Digest* by **Judith Rance-Roney** of **Lehigh University.** In "Transitioning Adult ESL Learners to Academic Programs," Dr. Rance-Roney examines the differences between academic and adult ESL programs and suggests curricular and programmatic strategies to facilitate transitioning learners from adult ESL to academic English or to GED programs.

Judith Rance-Roney

◆ Welcome to **Sue Conrady,** who has replaced Robert Headlee as Coordinator of Adult Education Programs for the **Washington (PA) I.U. #1.**

◆ The **Office of Computing Services at Drexel University** is again providing free technical support to adult education programs in southeastern Pennsylvania as they integrate computer technology into their programs. A grant from the ABLE Bureau provides phone support, software to review, and workshops at local program sites. To tap into these services call (215) 895-6872.

◆ **Mifflin County Library's Literacy Program,** under the direction of **Cathy Forsyth,** recently recognized 12 new tutors and other volunteer tutors who have been with the program over the years. Eleven tutors worked over 300 hours, two over 500 hours and two others over 1,000 hours on behalf of new readers!

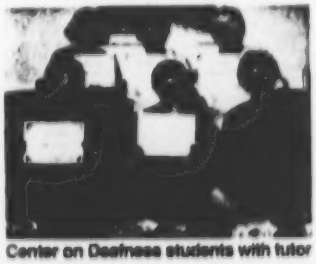
◆ Congratulations to **Georgia Hintz,** who is retiring after teaching 35 years in the ABE program at **Wernersville State Hospital.** Program staff from the Adult Education Department at **Reading Area Community College (Mary Schmidt,** Director) joined Wernersville staff in honoring Georgia at a luncheon held in her honor.

◆ The **Reader Development Program of The Free Library of Philadelphia** has an extensive collection of books written for adults who read on the 8th level or below. The program recently established circulating adult literacy collections at six branch libraries with multiple copies of the most useful and in-demand books from the RDP collection. Training of branch library staff was accomplished by RDP staff and literacy practitioners from agencies located in the branches' service areas.

◆ Borders Book Shops in Philadelphia city and suburban areas recently held a Literacy Campaign during which they sponsored a book drop, workshops presented by local literacy programs and readings by adult learners. Fifteen percent of book purchases for a week were contributed to the Philadelphia **Mayor's Commission on Literacy** and the **Delaware County Literacy Council.**

◆ Our Regional Staff Development Centers come up with some unique ideas to meet the needs of adult educators in Pennsylvania. To complement all the staff development activities geared to the needs of teachers and tutors, **Rachel Zilcosky,** coordinator of RSDC #4 in Pittsburgh, recently held an Administrator's Workshop with the first of a three-part series on effective management by **Joe Werlinich,** Director of Pennsylvania's Principal and Leadership Academy, and an Administrator's Roundtable with Don Block, Executive Director of the Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council as facilitator.

◆ **The Center On Deafness** in Pittsburgh offers a wide range of programs to deaf adult students. Administrative Director of the program is **Rosemary Garrity.** Shown here are some students in the Adult Literacy Program who received Certificates Of Achievement. These students come from a wide range of backgrounds, including single mothers, retired persons, and members of the workforce. Though different, they share a common goal: improving their quality of life by working to improve their literacy skills. In the front row on the right is volunteer tutor Pam Mowery.


Center on Deafness students with tutor

◆ **Lackawanna Junior College** has received a grant from the National Book Scholarship Fund (NBSF) in the form of New Readers Press materials, which LJC will use to implement a course in family literacy. The course will meet twice weekly at the Scranton Area Family Center. Babysitting services will be provided to adult students in the program. The grant was the result of an application filed with NBSF by **Joyce Kerrick,** Director of Adult Literacy at the college, and is part of a two-year pilot program offered by the Richard Donchian Foundation of Connecticut and Laubach Literacy International.

Joyce Kerrick

It's a Date!

Happy New Year 1996!

West Chester to Hold Technology Symposium

"Become Connected" is the theme of the Seventh Annual Technology Symposium to be held on the South Campus of West Chester University March 18 and 19, 1996. More than 100 exhibitors and 1,200 attendees are expected to participate.

The keynote speaker will be Michael Emme, Chairman, Chief Executive Officer, President of Systems and Computer Technology Corporation. Seminar tracks will include sessions on Interactive Multimedia, Distance Learning, The Internet, Small Business, Videoconferencing, and Trends in Technology.

For more information contact University College at (610) 436-3550.

Only 16 Weeks Till COABE

This is your chance to attend a National Conference in *your* field of adult basic education ... and right in your own backyard! The American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE) has a number of divisions which meet specific needs of adult educators and the Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE) is *our* Division. Join your colleagues from throughout the nation at the Doubletree Hotel in Pittsburgh on May 16-18, 1996, for concurrent sessions, exhibits of the latest materials and equipment, social events and opportunities to see the revitalized Golden Triangle in a city high on all the "Best Places" lists.

A Registration Reimbursement program will be available through the ABLE Bureau and the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE), our state affiliate of AAACE. Details will be sent to program directors, so contact your director now and make sure you get the necessary information.

PAACE members will get registration information in the PAACE Newsletter (to join PAACE write Box 3796, Harrisburg, PA 17105). *Buzz* readers who are not PAACE members are also invited to attend COABE. Contact Dr. Al Fascetti, (412) 338-3700. See you there!

JANUARY 1996

18-20 Educational Computer Conferences' Annual National Conference, San Francisco. Theme: "Technology, Reading & Learning Difficulties." Contact: Educational Computer Conferences, 1070 Crows Nest Way, Richmond, CA 94803.

24-27 Adult Literacy Practitioner Inquiry Project Inquiry Institute, Philadelphia. Adult literacy practitioners interested in an intensive opportunity to participate in an inquiry community are encouraged to apply. Stipends and travel reimbursements are available. Contact Alisa Belzer, (215) 898-8865, belzera@dolphin.upenn.edu.

FEBRUARY, 1996

(Note: The annual PAACE Midwinter Adult Education Conference will be held in conjunction with the Commission on Adult Basic Education—COABE National Conference to be held in Pittsburgh on May 16-18.)

2-4 North American Conference on Adolescent and Adult Literacy, Washington, DC. Contact: International Reading Association, 800 Barksdale Rd., Newark, DE 19714, (800) 336-7323, ext. 216.

8 PAACE Continuing Higher Education Division Annual Reception to honor Higher Education's Outstanding Students, Hershey. Contact Phoebe Novakovic, (610) 525-6325.

9 PAACE Continuing Higher Education Midwinter Conference, Hershey. Contact: Cheryl Boyer, Temple University-Harrisburg, 223 Walnut St., Harrisburg, PA 17101, (717) 232-6400.

20 ESL Training Teleconference: "Connecting ESL to GED and Credit Classes." Contact Paula Smith, Region 6 RSDC, (717) 232-0568.

March 1996

7 Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy (PSCAL) Forum, Harrisburg. Topic: "Family Literacy Support Services." Presentations by experts, panels, and discussion groups. Contact PSCAL: (800) 870-3858.

26-30 TESOL Convention, Chicago, IL. Contact: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages; 1600 Cameron St., Ste. 300, Alexandria, VA 22314.

12-15 1996 World Conference on Literacy, Philadelphia. Contact: International Literacy Institute, 3910 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104-3111.

18-19 Seventh Annual Technology Symposium, South Campus, West Chester University. Contact University College, (610) 436-3550.

Correction

Our November article concerning database training incorrectly identified one of the trainers. The training was conducted by Dr. William Murphy of the ABLE Bureau and Vanya Cason of the Center for Literacy in Philadelphia.

WHAT'S the Buzz?

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MARCH 1996

WHAT'S the Buzz?

PENNSYLVANIA ADULT EDUCATION'S PROFESSIONAL NEWSLETTER

News you can use ...

MARCH HIGHLIGHTS: Help for the "Non-Math" Teacher 2 Building Communities 3 Community Linkages 4 Grammar Corner 5 Math Corner 5 Legislative Update 5 Newsletter Roundup 6 People & Programs 7 It's a Date 8

Welfare Reforms Depend On Coordination of Literacy and Human Services

"Attention to literacy skills deficits is essential to any successful welfare reform initiative."

This is the basic conclusion of a study completed last year by the Washington, DC-based Family Impact Seminar.

The new bipartisan consensus that the vast majority of welfare mothers should be required to work outside the home raises the question of what kinds of education and training welfare mothers need in order to secure employment, remain employed, and leave the welfare rolls.

Because many welfare clients lack basic literacy skills the report encourages further exchanges of information between the literacy and human-services communities.

The study also concludes that current literacy program models and the JOBS (Job Opportunities for Basic Skills) which focus on sequential basic skills followed by job-skills training are "unlikely to lead to employment for many welfare mothers."

According to the study, the diversity of the welfare population makes unrealistic those literacy or JOBS programs which set job placement as their goal. "They [welfare recipients] need help with other impediments to employment: child care, medical benefits, etc." Even those requiring help in overcoming basic skills deficiencies will not be significantly helped by the typical, short-term, adult literacy program.

One particularly relevant statement in the study, especially in light of proposed federal legislation, is that "Welfare reform proposals that focus solely on moving the largest number of individuals into work as quickly as possible through intense job search activities and minimal basic skills training may succeed with those who are already job ready, or nearly so. However, the result for many may be low-paying, entry-level jobs that do not offer a ladder towards self-sufficiency. Additionally, some are likely to recycle back onto welfare."

The study concludes with a recommendation for the establishment of programs which offer large groups of individuals with very low literacy levels and other barriers a more intensive, individualized, family-based approach that integrates literacy with job training.

The complete report is available from the National Center on Adult Literacy, University of Pennsylvania, 3910 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104-3111.❖

'96 ADMIN WORKSHOPS NOTE MINOR CHANGES IN FUNDING GUIDELINES

Each year the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education's regional advisors and some support staff take to the road to present information important to programs as administrators complete applications for Section 322 (federal) and Act 143 (state) adult basic and literacy education funding.

We've been attending these workshops for many years and find they only get better, easier to understand, and shorter, with presenters zeroing in on what program directors writing the program proposals really want to know.

John (Sonny) Sloan, Northwest ABLE Advisor, helped take the show on the road this year.

The 1996 round of "admin workshops" is now complete and we assume by the time you read this your program's application has either been submitted (Act 143 applications were due on March 15) or well underway (Section 322 applications are due on March 29).

Funding: As expected, it doesn't appear there will be any increases. Despite this, the Bureau will entertain applications for expanding or new programs in case additional funding becomes available. The word is: "Prospects for expansion of old programs and/or funding new programs are not good." Allocation letters have been sent to all programs, so everyone should know what they have to spend and can budget accordingly.

Application consolidations have resulted in a significant reduction in the time it takes the ABLE Bureau to get programs funded. Advisors spent 25% less time evaluating consolidated proposals for 1995-96, and the Bureau hopes proposal preparers found the consolidation (a

Continued on p.2

FOR THE 'NON-MATH' MATH TEACHER ... HELP IS OUT THERE

"Who Counts in Adult Literacy Programs? A National Survey of Numeracy Education" is a 1995 Technical Report from the National Center on Adult Literacy. A key recommendation of the study was that "Adult literacy teachers need more training in adult mathematics instruction as well as guidance on how best to incorporate their programs' available math software into their own individualized curricula."

Several special projects to assist adult educators in teaching math have been produced in Pennsylvania under Section 353 of the Adult Education Act. Some are geared for the "non-math" teacher—the adult educator who feels the need for more technical help in preparing to present math concepts.

Video Instructional Course for GED Math Teachers. Project #98-4025. Project Director: Dan Tempestini. Project Developer: Guy Ruzzier. Erie Adult Learning Center.

This course was developed "to prepare and offer teaching strategies to teachers of Adult Education, particularly those who work in evening or part-time programs and may not be well acquainted with the subject area of mathematics." The instructional program is taped in 30 half-hour segments. Guidebooks with exercises are also provided.

Mr. Ruzzier, who has 24 years' experience as an adult educator, deals with the concept of "Basic Mathematics" from an adult learner's point of view and, along with the teaching of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, incorporates the study of algebra, geometry, and trigonometry. His approach permits the math teacher to present the basics while avoiding the students' attitude that they are learning "elementary school stuff."

TV Math—Video Training for Tutors. Project #98-4030. Project Director: Donna Cooper. Mayor's Commission on Literacy.

Recognizing that "numeracy and mathematical applications are frequently given little attention in adult literacy programs, particularly those which rely on volunteer tutors," this project produced a 20-minute instructional videotape and guide for adult literacy tutors. Instruction proceeds from real-life situations (dividing a cake, placing furniture, etc.) to math "methods" instruction taken from the *Adult Literacy Handbook for Students and Tutors* used by the Center for Literacy to ways math tutors can relate instructional content to life experiences.

Math/numeracy instruction for tutors offered in the tape may help "math-anxious" tutors feel more confident. However, the program requires careful follow-up and additional instruction in math to produce tutors who can provide the level of math/numeracy instruction appropriate to adult learners. The project recognizes this fact with a listing of resources available to math tutors.

"Adult literacy teachers need more training in adult mathematics instruction."

Two other projects worth your time are **GED Mathematics Teacher's Guide for Non-Math Teachers**, Project #99-3058, and **An In-Service Math Instruction Program for Tutors**, Project #99-3013.

Final reports and products of all of these projects are available on free loan from the state literacy resource centers: Western Pennsylvania, (800) 446-5607, ext. 216; or AdvancE, (800) 992-2283.❖

What's the Buzz?

What's the Buzz?, Pennsylvania Adult Education's Professional Newsletter is published five times in 1995-96 by Adult Education Linkage Services, Box 214, Troy, PA 16947, under partial funding provided through the Pennsylvania Department of Education from the U.S. Adult Education Act, Section 353. It is distributed without charge to practitioners of adult basic and literacy education in Pennsylvania and no endorsement of newsletter contents by PDE nor USDOE should be inferred.

Editor: Dave Fluke
Copy & Production: Tana Reiff
Editorial Board: Bootsie Barbour, Ella Morin, Tana Reiff

This publication is available in alternative media on request.

ADMIN WORKSHOPS

(from p.1)

single application for Section 322 and Act 143 funding) resulted in less paperwork. Every Act 143 program received initial money by September (96% in August) as did 99% of the Section 322 programs.

Most significant change. According to the presentation we attended the most significant change for 1996-97 will be in the 12 equal monthly payments to programs (as contrasted to a variety of payment schedules this year). This will necessitate filing Quarterly Reconciliation Reports (enabling the Comptroller to manage the flow of money from the state to local agencies), which are due the 10th day of October, January, and April. Experience shows that programs should be sure the Comptroller's Office *receives* these reports by the 10th—no adjustment for weekends or holidays—or the payments to your program are likely to be delayed.

When in doubt, ask your area advisor. As evidenced by their answers to questions at the admin workshops, the Bureau's area advisors are "up to speed" and can provide the answers to questions which arise during preparation of the application and throughout the program year. If you're not sure who your area advisor is, call the ABLE Bureau's Regional Program Division at (717) 787-6344.❖

BUILDING COMMUNITIES FOR LEARNING: A PROCESS

In the November 1995 Buzz we noted comments made by representatives of the state departments of Education, Labor and Industry, and Welfare at last fall's Call to Action II conference. These speakers, along with First Lady Michele Ridge and Congressman Bill Goodling, emphasized the applications of *cooperation* and *coordination* as being yardsticks upon which the future success of adult basic and literacy education in Pennsylvania would be measured.

According to ABLE Bureau Director Cheryl Keenan, who chaired the Community Based Literacy Planning Committee, a subcommittee of the Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy (PSCAL), adult basic and literacy education is a community service which, to be effective, requires educational, social, and economic entities within a community to cooperatively participate in meeting the needs of adults who desire to improve the quality of their lives.

Community-based literacy planning is team building which identifies and mobilizes agencies and organizations in the community to respond to the adult as a learner. It establishes communication among stakeholders and builds local forums for action in serving the needs of adults in the community. Community-based planning also provides a vehicle for determining ways and means of sharing limited resources.

Three pilot communities. In October 1995, following Call to Action II, 19 "core groups" representing communities throughout Pennsylvania met for a day of orientation and training in the Community Planning Process. At that time three community groups were selected for PSCAL funding to initiate literacy community planning. Working in conjunction with these demonstration sites, PSCAL will identify resources and support needed to implement effective community literacy planning and develop a statewide implementation strategy which will include seeking public support, identifying forums for information dissemination, devising replication strategies, and marketing community-based planning to promote the delivery of effective adult service.

From a community planning pilot program, the Wyoming Valley Literacy Coalition at Wilkes University, Wilkes-Barre: Sister Irene Harrington, Sheila Sherow, and Mary Martino.

Key players at the recent "Building Communities" Conference included JoAnn Weinberger, Executive Director, Center for Literacy, Philadelphia, and Co-chair, PA 2000 Adult Literacy Task Force; Cheryl Keenan, Director, Bureau of ABLE; Steve Nunes, Council for Adult and Experiential Learning and facilitator of the community-based planning activities.

Outcomes of community collaboration. The expectation is that community literacy planning will produce the following:

- The development of linkages among basic educational programs, other educational programs, and employment and training programs with the goal of creating a continuum of programs and services to meet the needs of every adult.
- The development of linkages among human-service and educational programs to meet the complex needs of adults and allow communities to offer necessary support services.
- The development of linkages of education with business and industry to shape educational programs that integrate academic and experiential learning to meet the increasing demands of the workplace.

Local programs should become involved. As a community responsibility, the provision of adult basic and literacy education services varies according to the missions and mandates of each group, agency, organization, or individual in the community. It is advantageous for local programs to become involved in community-based planning to enhance services to their clients while leveraging their limited

Continued on p.4

From the Family Literacy Coalition, Fayette Co.: Lori Crichfield and Sharon Janik. Third pilot program is Lycoming Co. Literacy Coalition, Williamsport.

If you're looking for ways to involve the community more effectively in your adult education program, here's a winning idea! Sponsored by the Lawrence (Massachusetts) Public Schools and headed by Judith C. Marley, the "Community Linkages" program structures one-hour discussion groups on employment, parenting, personal development, health, and other community issues. Guest speakers are from local organizations, including employers, some of whom eventually help clients secure jobs.

Speakers share information related to goals established by the program with topics selected on the basis of surveys of the class. Former adult students frequently return as speakers.

Adult learners participate in the program to prepare for successful community involvement while increasing their academic skills. They spend 27 hours per week in classes ranging from English to ESL to GED preparation, and staff at the Adult Learning Center say the combination of community involvement and community services is directly responsible for the program's consistently exceeding its placement goals.

Calendar. The community integration program establishes a monthly calendar of guest speakers. This permits instructors and students to plan activities appropriate to the presentation topic. The monthly calendar is distributed to persons on the Center's mailing list, including various community organizations, local officials, etc. The calendar is also posted at locations throughout the community and the public is invited to attend the sessions.

Speakers. Each speaker is added to the Center's permanent mailing list and is regularly reminded of the program and the clients who are preparing to move into the community for work. Often presenters contact the Center to request a place on the calendar for another visit. Many say they are pleased with the publicity the widely distributed calendar gives their topics.

Adult learners in the program enjoy some spin-off benefits of the involvement of community members in their program. A speaker from the United Parcel Service appears monthly and UPS offers scholarships for graduates. A speaker from a local clothing manufacturer donated 200 pieces of clothing to the Center to be used by students during job interviews and special events.

The community linkages established by the program have contributed to an increase in the morale of Adult Learning Center staff and students by achieving acceptance and recognition throughout the community.

The Lowell Educational Development Program offers these tips for other programs planning a guest speaker component:

- Get suggestions from clients in the program. What are they interested in learning about?
- Select a staff member who will be responsible for inviting the guests. (A Pennsylvania adult educator suggested involving a retired member of the community as program coordinator.)
- Advertise the speakers and topics on a monthly calendar. Circulate the calendar to students, former and current guest speakers, and friends and funders of your program. Post the calendar in public places in your community.
- Schedule your workshops at the same time each day. Invite staff to attend.
- Have students complete an evaluation form after each speaker.
- Send thank-you notes to all guests within a short time of their presentation. Personalize this note with a compliment taken from students' evaluations.❖

This article was adapted from Bright Ideas, *a newsletter published by World Education, 210 Lincoln St., Boston, MA 02111.*

BUILDING COMMUNITIES

(from p.3)

resources in cooperation with other organizations and groups.

Local programs need to continue to develop the depth and breadth of their affiliations with other community organizations if they are to increase the impact of their services.

For more information about the Community Planning Process, contact the Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy, 502 Ellen Rd., Camp Hill, PA 17011.❖

E-MAIL TRANSCENDS THE WEATHER

by Tana Reiff, Project AXIS

During the nastiest week of the nasty winter of 1996, I learned just how essential online communication has become.

January 9 was the due date for Administrators Handbook articles to be in my editorial hands. If you live in the infamous blizzard region, you'll recall the conditions of that week (how could you forget?). Just getting from the front door to the street was like a trek in the Himalayas. Even the U.S. Postal Service had to suspend delivery most of that week. But with computer humming and electricity and phone service intact, the e-mail came through! I received some 15 manuscripts online, allowing me to keep the handbook project right on schedule. E-mail also enabled a sizable number of adult educators to check in on each other's welfare and exchange war—er, snow stories. What's more, our practitioner inquiry group could never have gotten together for a face-to-face meeting, so we held a realtime online chat instead.

If it hadn't been for the hot-chocolate express operating in the kitchen and the lack of a snow blower, the historic blizzard would have been almost irrelevant to my work situation. To be sure, once the car was dug out and the mammoth melt-down was over, I appreciated freedom of movement like never before. But e-mail had given new meaning to the old postal expression "Neither snow nor rain ... "❖

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

A GRAMMAR CORNER

Fragments and Run-Ons

by Abbei Brawley
Southwest Regional
Advisor, Bureau of ABLE

Teacher Tips

What's the difference between a sentence fragment and a run-on sentence? A fragment is what it implies: a *piece*. It's a group of words that does not meet the criteria of a complete sentence, which should contain a subject and a verb. It must also express a complete thought. On the other hand, a "run-on" is a group of words (maybe two sentences or several clauses together), combined into one sentence. Sometimes a comma separates them, and sometimes there is no punctuation at all. Run-ons can be corrected several ways.

Here are some techniques which I have used successfully to teach fragments and run-on sentences. Although I make extensive use of the blackboard and supplemental exercises, this can also be taught by putting each piece of a sentence on cardboard or cards, with the connectors on separate cards, thereby demonstrating to the students the different ways to connect the sentences.

Run-on: Caffeine in coffee acts as a stimulant, it is mildly habit-forming.

Five easy remedies (in boldface):

1. Use a comma and conjunction:
   - Caffeine in coffee acts as a stimulant, **and** it is mildly habit-forming.
2. Use a semicolon when the two clauses are closely related in meaning:
   - Caffeine in coffee acts as a stimulant; it is mildly habit-forming.
3. Use a semicolon and a conjunctive adverb, showing the relationship between sentences:
   - Caffeine in coffee acts as a stimulant; **consequently,** it is mildly habit-forming.
4. Change one sentence into a subordinate clause, set off by commas:
   - Caffeine in coffee, **which acts as a stimulant,** is mildly habit-forming.
5. The easy way out! Make two separate sentences, using a comma and an uppercase letter:
   - Caffeine in coffee acts as a stimulant. It is mildly habit-forming.

Now, once you've mastered run-ons, fragments are a piece of cake!

Fragment: Scampered across the white blanket of snow.

Remedy: Insert a subject:

- **The small, grey squirrel** scampered across the white blanket of snow.

End of lesson! Good luck.❖

Correction to the January 1996 Grammar Corner:

In some of the examples given, the items in question should be underlined in context:

- How many e's are in Tennessee?
- Some people use a lot of I mean's when they speak.

Editor's note: Readers with specific grammar concerns should contact Ms. Brawley at (717) 787-6344.

Math Corner ±%>x=

Numbers Representing Quantitites Less Than 1

Teacher Tips

Fractions, decimals, and percents all represent numbers that are less than 1. This is the critical concept to get across—that these numbers designate pieces or parts of a whole.

Things to remember about teaching fractions:

- Common fractions represent numbers less than 1.
- The bottom number of a fraction tells how many *equal* parts something has altogether.
- The top number of a fraction tells how many of those parts you have.
- Common fractions can be taught by showing their relevance in writing checks, using recipes, and measuring.
- Some points to stress:
  - ✓ reducing improper fractions
  - ✓ equivalent fractions, e.g. 3/4 and 12/16
  - ✓ the part is written over the whole
- Use magazine and newspaper ads to teach fractions and make them relevant.❖

The above was excerpted from a Section 353 project, PA #99-3013 by Ellen McDevitt.

PAACE Reports ABLE Legislative Update

At the annual business meeting of the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE), Legislative Committee co-chair Jean Henry, an adult educator with the Lebanon County Housing Authority, reported on the status of state and federal legislation expected to impact upon ABLE in Pennsylvania.

At the state level, Act 143 literacy funding was not cut in Governor Ridge's budget proposal; indeed, the Governor is calling for a 3% increase, the first ever in Act 143's ten-year history. This was not the case with many other programs, including vocational education. Jean noted, "In this year of budget cuts, we are still alive!"

The budget will be voted on in the Pennsylvania Legislature sometime in May or June, and it is not clear how much of the request of $8.758 (up from $8.525) million will be earmarked for Literacy Corps and/or PREP (Progressive Readiness for Employment Program).

Another piece of good news is that the Pennsylvania Adult Basic and Literacy Education Act (SB 975) passed the Senate and the House Education Committee and is now up for consideration in the House. This Act will incorporate Act 143 of 1986 along with coordination of planning, funding, and service delivery of adult basic education programs in Pennsylvania.

Federal legislation relating to ABLE is unsettled and may not be resolved until after the 1996 election.

For more information call Jean Henry at (717) 273-6575 or e-mail to JHenry266.aol.com.❖

Newsletter Roundup

In which we note types and contents of professional newsletters to assist Buzz readers in finding their way through the adult education newsletter maze ...

➧ "Research Does Not Support Matching Instruction to Learning Styles" is the title of a Letter to the Editor in the December/January issue of ***Reading Today,*** the newsletter of the International Reading Association (IRA). Written by three college-level reading specialists, the letter states: "Matching children by modality or learning style (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, or combinations of the three types) is an approach to reading instruction that is neither useful nor effective, no matter how intuitive it may seem." Although the information in the letter relates primarily to children, some research studies are quoted which may be of interest to adult educators as well.

The same issue reported the filing of bankruptcy by Gateway Educational Products, maker of the controversial "Hooked on Phonics." Sales in 1994 totaled $130 million, but regulations by the Federal Trade Commission concerning advertising claims resulted in a drop in sales.

The IRA is located at 800 Barksdale Rd., Newark, DE 19714.

➧ The Stern Center for Language and Learning is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to solving learning problems. In its Winter 1995-96 newsletter is an interesting article titled "Gifted *and* Learning Disabled" in which author Melissa King describes an aptitude-achievement discrepancy within a gifted person which can have dire consequences in terms of self-esteem and being able to perform to potential. For students identified as gifted who possess a subtle learning disability, the gaps in achievement often widen with age. The Center may be contacted at 20 Allen Brook Ln., Williston, VT 05495.

➧ An area of adult learning receiving more attention is that of *project-based learning.* The January/February 1996 issue of ***all write news*** ran a follow-up article to the introduction to project-based learning in the previous issue. The more recent article deals with "Inquiry Maps" as they relate to adult students continuing their learning experiences as "ongoing, generative learning projects," which, in turn, serve as motivators for new students. An Inquiry Map is a learning tool which includes student-generated materials such as drawings, photographs, video, etc. in a variety of formats ranging from a three-ring binder to a World Wide Web homepage. *all write news* is distributed by the Adult Literacy Resource Center, 989 Commonwealth Ave., Boston, MA 02215.

➧ ***Literacy Update,*** the newsletter of The Literacy Assistance Center (LAC), reports an estimate of government funding cuts of $26 billion in the near future. United Way of New York's Executive Vice President, Larry Mandell, says, "The grand total of philanthropic support nationwide is just $3 billion." Mandell makes two points relevant to ABLE programs: non-profits cannot expect private money to fill the gap left by funding cuts, and non-profits that plan ahead now, recognize the fundamental sea change in funding, and implement innovative strategies will be those that survive, and perhaps thrive, in the new landscape. He says, "the often overlooked rule #1 is you have to ask for the money!" LAC's address is 84 William St., 14th Fl., New York, NY 10038.

➧ A recent issue of ***Staff Development News*** from the Region 7 RSDC (Ann Koefer, Coordinator) recommends a free quarterly newsletter that is available to ESL teachers from the Center for Applied Linguistics, 1118 22nd St. NW, Washington, DC 20037. Ask to be put on the mailing list for ***The Connector.***

➧ ***Resource Update*** is a publication of the U.S. Division of Adult Education and Literacy Clearinghouse. In a recent issue two of the Section 353 Special Projects featured were produced by Pennsylvania programs. "Teaching Strategies for ESOL Volunteers," completed by the IHM Literacy Center and GED Center in Philadelphia was designed to offer ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) instruction through technology to multicultural-multiethnic volunteer faculty tutors.

"The Trainer Handbook" and "Idea Book for Volunteer Tutors" were completed by the Mid-State Literacy Council and are designed to assist volunteer literacy trainers and tutors in serving adults with special needs. These Section 353 Special projects from 1993 are available from either of the State Adult Literacy Resource Centers. *Resource Update,* along with the USDAEL newsletter ***A.L.L. Points Bulletin*** is available by calling (202) 401-9570.

➧ Laubach Literacy Action's (LLA) ***The Forum*** publishes information about management issues for adult literacy programs. In a recent (#4) issue the front-page feature article related to a computer system developed by the Scranton Council for Literacy Advance (SCOLA) to track student progress while compiling information about SCOLA's programs to provide accountability to their board and state and federal governmental agencies.

➧ A recent issue of ***The Voice of Literacy,*** the newsletter of Adult Literacy Action at Penn State's Beaver Campus (Nancy Woods, Director) notes that in Finland there is almost no illiteracy due to a government regulation which requires anyone getting married to be able to read and write. How's that for "family literacy"?❖

People and Programs

◆ The **Adult Learning Center** in West Chester has ceased operations as of January 1, due to funding cutbacks. The Center was established a year ago by **Kathy Kline,** former coordinator of the Region 8 Staff Development Center. (A portent of things to come??)

◆ **Dr. Barbara Woodruff** has left the **TIU Adult Education and Job Training Center** in Lewistown and is now coordinating children's mental health services for the **Juniata Valley MH-MR** in Huntington, Juniata, and Mifflin Counties.

◆ Congratulations to **Dr. G. Michael Vavrek** on becoming president of the **Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE).** Mike is with the School of Extended Programs at Bloomsburg University and has filled a number of leadership positions in PAACE, including chair of the Strategic Planning Process. He is also the program chair of the upcoming national conference of the Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE) to be held in Pittsburgh May 16-18.

G. Michael Vavrek

◆ Congratulations, also, to **Dehra Shafer,** outgoing **PAACE** president. Under Dehra's presidency the organization began a number of initiatives designed to provide high-quality professional services to PAACE members.

◆ Welcome to **Sis-Obed Torres Cordero** as the new Executive Director of **ASPIRA of Pennsylvania,** our state affiliate of the national ASPIRA Association, Inc. Mr. Torres Cordero is the founder/director of La Plena Communications, Inc., a bilingual publication serving the Lehigh Valley. The former state Executive Director, **Emanuel Ortiz,** is now Deputy Mayor for Community Services and Education in the Philadelphia Mayor's Office.

◆ The **Susquehanna Valley Adult Literacy Cooperative** is participating in The Bloomsburg Theatre Ensemble's "reading through acting" program, which involves adult students' receiving help from their tutors in writing short letters and staging the letters in the theater group. Although intended primarily as an "acting exercise," the potential for spin-off activity in reading, writing, self-image, and other areas is enormous.

◆ **Don Block,** Executive Director of the **Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council,** has had a number of literacy-related writings printed in national publications recently. The latest appears in the Fall/Winter issue of *The Ladder,* the newsletter of Push Literacy Action Now (PLAN), a proactive literacy organization based in Washington, DC. Don's article, "The Peter Principle and Adult Literacy," laments the lack of smooth career paths in literacy with the result that some of the best teachers and tutors are placed in administrative positions (where they have little or no contact with adult learners) and find they are often not trained or prepared for these types of work duties. He feels nearly all the staff development of recent years has been geared toward curriculum and instruction. "I would like to see more training on management topics such as personnel administration and financial management," writes Mr. Block. PLAN's address is 1528 Pennsylvania Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20003.

◆ **Chuck Holbrook,** Northeast Area Advisor for the ABLE Bureau, recently distributed a listing of professional development information sources, including newsletters, ERIC, AdvancE, etc. Considering the high staff turnover in Pennsylvania, this should be a big help to neophyte adult educators.

◆ We received a letter over the signature of **Dr. Bob Laubach** telling of an organization called the **American Literacy Council.** According to "Dr. Bob," the ALC "seeks to aid the cause of literacy by combining the latest in graphic, audio and computer technology with the strength of the Council's years of research and commitment to phonic principles." ALC's address is 680 Fort Washington Ave., New York, NY 10040.

◆ Friends and former colleagues of **Gordon Jones** were pleased to see him in attendance at the annual business meeting of the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE) held in Hershey on February 8. Gordon is a former ABLE Division staffer who has just returned from a trip to Greece and is making plans for a spring trip to the Caribbean. There is life after ABLE!

Gordon Jones

◆ Welcome to **Maria Chapis,** the new director of the **Norristown Literacy Council.** The Council is now 11 years old.

◆ Greetings to **Sue Snider,** a Literacy Americorps-Pittsburgh member who is helping with the Region 4 Staff Development Center while Coordinator **Rachel Zilcosky** is on maternity leave. Best wishes to Rachel and her family.

◆ The RSDCs—**Regional Staff Development Centers**—will become RPDCs—**Regional Professional Development Centers**—beginning July 1, and the number will be reduced from the present nine to six.

It's a Date!

MARCH 1996

18-19 Seventh Annual Technology Symposium. South Campus, West Chester University. Contact: University College (610) 436-3550.

26-30 TESOL Convention. Chicago. Contact: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, 1600 Cameron St., Ste. 300, Alexandria, VA 22314.

29 DUE DATE FOR SECTION 322 PROPOSALS.

29-31 Student Coalition for Action on Literacy Education (SCALE) 2nd Annual Conference. Chapel Hill, NC. Contact: (919) 962-1542.

APRIL 1996

12 DUE DATE FOR PENNSYLVANIA LITERACY CORPS PROGRAM PROPOSALS.

21-23 Fifth Annual National Conference on Family Literacy, Louisville, KY. Theme: "Family Literacy: Opportunities in the Midst of Change." Contact: National Center on Family Literacy, Waterfront Plaza, Ste. 200, 325 W. Main St., Louisville, KY 40202.

22 ESL Training Teleconference: "From Talk to Action: Problem-Solving in Adult ESL Classes." Contact your Regional Staff Development Center.

28-May 3 41st International Reading Association (IRA) Conference, New Orleans. Contact: IRA, (800) 336-7323.

29-30 Workplace Learning Conference hosted by U.S. Department of Education. Theme: "Workplace Learning: The Strategic Advantage." Practical "how-to" information about planning, implementing, evaluating, and negotiating workplace learning initiatives. Pre-conference activities April 28. Contact: (800) 446-0399.

MAY 1996

15 National Homeless Education Conference, Pittsburgh (preceding COABE Conference), 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Contact: Barbara Duffield, 1612 K Street NW, Washington, DC 20006.

16-18 Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE) National Conference, Pittsburgh. For registration contact: Al Fascetti, (412) 338-3700.

16-18 First Annual ASPIRA Conference, Washington, DC. Contact: (202) 835-3600.

17-19 Adult Education Research Conference, University of South Florida, Tampa. Contact: Kathleen Hargiss, (813) 974-3455.

21 Fourth Annual Conference on Serving Adults with Learning Disabilities, Waterbury, CT. Contact: EASTCONN, 376 Hartford Tpke., North Windham, CT 06256.

26-29 1996 National Conference on the Adult Learner, Irving, TX. Contact: (803) 777-9944.

29-31 34th Annual Correctional Education Association Region 1 Conference, King of Prussia. (The Millersville Correction Education Summer Institute will not be held in 1996). Contact: Correction Association of America, 4380 Forbes Blvd., Lanham, MD 20706.

31 1996 Inter-Regional Conference, RSDCs 1 and 4, Holiday Inn, Hermitage, PA. Contact: RSDCs 1 and 4.

JUNE 1996

6 Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy (PSCAL) Forum, Harrisburg. Topic: "Citizenship." Presentations by experts, panels, and discussion groups. Contact: PSCAL, (800) 870-3858.

12-13 LLA Pre-Conference Workshops (see box, left).

13-16 Laubach Literacy Action (LLA) 1996 Biennial Conference, Portland, OR. Contact: Janet Hiemstra, LLA, 1320 Jamesville Ave., Box 131, Syracuse, NY 13210.

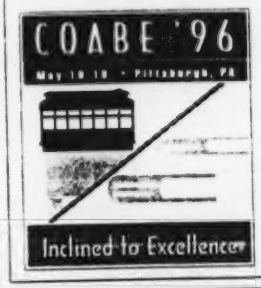
21-23 1996 TESOL Academy, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore. Contact: TESOL, 1600 Cameron St., Ste. 300, Alexandria, VA 22314.

AUGUST 1996

1-3 Ninth Annual Adult Literacy and Technology Conference, Chicago. Contact: Illinois Secretary of State Literacy Office, 431 S. 4th St., Springfield, IL 62701, jgordon@library.sos.state.il.us.

COABE Countdown

We think you know by now—it's May 16-18, with pre-conferences May 14 and 15. More than 200 sessions with nationally recognized presenters in adult basic education. ABLE Success Stories. Dinners, banquet, dance. A Boat Cruise (it'll be spring, remember?), nightclub entertainment, museums, and other cultural attractions in what some travel experts call the #1 city in America—PITTSBURGH.



Registration forms are now available. Call (412) 481-4836 or fax (412) 481-0187.

This is *an important national conference* in our specific field of adult education. You can't afford to miss it! Contact your Regional Staff Development Center about professional development reimbursement to attend the COABE.

WHAT'S the Buzz?

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MAY 1996

WHAT'S the Buzz?

PENNSYLVANIA ADULT EDUCATION'S PROFESSIONAL NEWSLETTER

MAY HIGHLIGHTS: New PA 2000 Publication 2 Public Forum on Workforce Development 3 Senator Visits Center 3 GED Examiners' Conference 4 Tech Training 4 Literacy in Prison 5 Letter to the Editor 5 Math Corner &Teaching Tips 7 Newsletter Roundup 7 People & Programs 8-9 It's a Date 10

And the Winner Is ...

PENNSYLVANIA ADULT EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR—JUDITH A. AARONSON

The list of PAACE Outstanding Adult Educators of the Year reads like the honor roll that it is of dedicated professionals who, year after year, give of themselves to further the goals of their adult students, their staff members, and the thousands of adult educators throughout Pennsylvania.

Judith Aaronson

Sometimes the accomplishments of the Outstanding Adult Educator of the Year are not widely known; at other times their accomplishments are recognized throughout the state's adult education professional community; at all times the Adult Educator of the Year is selected for his or her selfless devotion to our profession.

Judith A. Aaronson, the 1996 winner, is a professional who

Continued on p.2

U.S. Secretary of Education Visits Center for Literacy

Richard W. Riley makes a stop while in Philadelphia.

by Rebecca Donham, The Center for Literacy, Inc.

As part of his March trip to Philadelphia for the World Conference on Literacy, U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley expressed a desire to visit a local literacy program and selected the Center for Literacy in Philadelphia for the visit.

The Center for Literacy, founded in 1968, is the nation's largest and Pennsylvania's oldest community-based adult literacy provider. In Philadelphia's urban environment, CFL attracts hard-to-serve and most-in-need adult students. It received the Secretary of Education's Award in 1994 as an "Outstanding Adult Education and Literacy Program."

Secretary Riley's visit permitted him to meet current and former students and tutors and to get a firsthand look at the work CFL is doing. He sat in on a class discussion and viewed a relatively new tool at work in adult education—computer telecommunications.

Gathering around the U.S. Secretary of Education are (left to right): Pat Beach, Jane McGovern, Rebecca Donham, Sandra Choukroun, a Department of Education staff member, Riley, JoAnn Weinberger, and Judi Taylor.

Commitment to education. At a luncheon sponsored by Mellon Bank earlier in the day, the Secretary expressed his commitment to focusing national attention on education. "The country's literacy rate is just as important as a balanced budget," he said. "We need to put the spotlight on reading for children and adults."

Secretary Riley praised the adult students and complimented CFL for its "national reputation." "The most anybody can do is to try to improve themselves and their families, and that's what you're doing," he said. "When we talk in Washington about literacy centers, this is one that we use as an example."

Executive Director of CFL is JoAnn Weinberger.◆

AARONSON
(from p.1)

employs the results of adult education research and student satisfaction surveys to identify her program's strong points and identify ways in which delivery can be modified to better meet student needs. She is presently Director of Educational Services for Goodwill Industries of Pittsburgh and has devoted more than 20 years to adult education. Her insight into the challenges faced by adult learners and educators has resulted in numerous cases of her establishing innovative ways to respond to these challenges.

She is a leader who builds inclusive systems based upon input from community members, social services agencies, and literacy programs. In addition, she has demonstrated her ability to advance the mission of adult education by educating political leaders and her fellow adult educators as well as the general public to adult literacy issues.

She is a developer of collaborations (one of her early involvements was as founder of the Pittsburgh Literacy Initiative), is strongly involved in workplace literacy, and her involvement in family literacy resulted in her organization's receiving a community award in that field.

This year she volunteered to serve as Chair of the Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE) Conference in Pittsburgh and the 400+ Pennsylvania ABLE'ers attending COABE could only imagine the hours, days, and months Judith spent to make things come together at this national conference.

In presenting the 1996 Adult Educator of the Year Award to Ms. Aaronson, Jo Ann Weinberger, Director of the Center for Literacy in Philadelphia and the 1995 Award Winner, described Judith as "Energetic and Optimistic, with foresight, innovative ideas and leadership abilities, and a strong commitment to the field of adult education."

On behalf of our 4,000+ readers in adult basic and literacy education, The Buzz extends our congratulations and gratitude to Judith A. Aaronson. ❖

what's the Buzz?

What's the Buzz?, Pennsylvania Adult Education's Professional Newsletter is published five times in 1995-96 by Adult Education Linkage Services, Box 214, Troy, PA 16947, under partial funding provided through the Pennsylvania Department of Education from the U.S. Adult Education Act, Section 353. It is distributed without charge to practitioners of adult basic and literacy education in Pennsylvania and no endorsement of newsletter contents by PDE nor USDOE should be inferred.

Editor: Dave Fluke
Copy & Production: Tana Reiff
Editorial Board: Bootsie Barbour, Ella Morin, Tana Reiff

This publication is available in alternative media on request.

PENNSYLVANIA 2000 TASK FORCE RELEASES LITERACY PUBLICATIONS

Pennsylvania 2000 is a statewide coalition of business, education, and state government leaders committed to education reform. It was established by Governor Casey in 1992 to help Pennsylvania move aggressively toward the achievement of the National Education Goals, especially Goal 6, which states: "By the year 2000, every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship."

In October 1995, Pennsylvania 2000, the Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy, and Mellon Bank sponsored the second statewide conference, "Call to Action II: Planning for Adult Literacy." The Pennsylvania 2000 Adult Literacy Task Force, co-chaired by Richard Torbert of Mellon PSFS and JoAnn Weinberger, Executive Director of the Center for Literacy in Philadelphia, has released two publications of interest to every professional in Pennsylvania involved in adult basic and literacy education.

Call to Action II. The first publication is an Executive Summary of the October 1995 conference. In addition to featuring key points made by conference presenters, including Pennsylvania First Lady Michele Ridge, U.S. Congressman Bill Goodling, and representatives of the Pennsylvania Departments of Labor and Industry, Education, and Welfare, the summary outlines the Action Steps for Literacy Advocacy which were developed during the conference.

As stated in the November 1995 issue of The Buzz, "The times they are a changin'." Although Call to Action II presenters did not go into specifics, they did make the following points, outlined in the PA 2000 publication: on the federal level, legislation will provide states with block grants for welfare and adult education and training; on the state level the major changes resulting from new federal laws will enable Governor Ridge to plan and implement provisions of the block grants with Adult Education and Training as part of the presently ongoing Interdepartmental Strategic Planning Process, with the Department of Labor and Industry as the lead agency and including the Departments of Welfare, Education, Aging, Commerce, and Community Affairs. (This spring's Forum on Workforce Development described by Governor Ridge—see page 3—is expected to provide more specifics about Pennsylvania's efforts during these "changin' times.")

"Action Steps" center around developing contacts between state adult literacy advocates and state government leaders.

Continued on next page

PA 2000 *(from p.2)*

"Action Steps" described in the publication center around developing contacts between state adult literacy advocates and state government leaders and providing these leaders and the public with information about literacy programs. Also noted is the importance of coordination in departmental efforts and funding, described in Senate Bill 975, the Pennsylvania Adult Basic and Literacy Education Act.

"Community Planning for Family Literacy," described in the final section of the Action II publication, includes sections for Community Planning for Family Literacy, Welfare-to-Work, Technology, and Workforce Education.

State Funding for Adult Basic and Literacy Education Programs, the second Task Force publication, provides an update of the inventory of state funding available for ABLE programs, including federal Adult Education Act monies. The Adult Literacy Task Force compiled the first inventory in spring of 1994, and the 1995-96 numbers show a slight decrease in funds which *must* be used for ABLE ($29,197,965) and a substantial increase ($11 million) in other funds which *may* be used for ABLE. Total for both dedicated and non-dedicated funding is nearly $93.5 million. The brochure identifies the various services supported by the state Departments of Education, Commerce, Community Affairs, and Public Welfare.

The address for Pennsylvania 2000 is 200 N. Third St., Ste. 1000, Harrisburg, PA 17101.❖

GOVERNOR RIDGE PLANS PUBLIC FORUM ON WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Governor Tom Ridge recently sent a letter to Pennsylvania adult education leaders in which he outlined state plans for developing an overall strategy for workforce development.

The letter notes that, regardless of the legislation that might be finally passed by the U.S. Congress, representatives of various state Departments and the Pennsylvania General Assembly have "indexed existing education and job training programs, reviewed current and expected statutory mandates, and identified the various stakeholder interests associated with state and local workforce development programs" in preparation for a rethinking and restructuring of workforce development in the state.

The letter, which was sent to members of the Board of Directors of the Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy (PSCAL), states the Governor's belief that federal initiatives will eventually "present a challenge to rethink and restructure workforce development" in Pennsylvania.

"By working together," the letter continued, "we believe that we can develop a workforce development system that will make Pennsylvania a leader among states and a competitor among nations."

Field reactions. Reacting to the letter, Jeff Woodyard, Opportunities Industrialization Center, Harrisburg, said, "I'm glad the Governor is concerned about this matter. We have already seen a cut in services as the result of the consolidation of the Bureau of Community Affairs and I'm concerned that grass-roots, non-profit organizations have some input to this restructuring of workforce development in Pennsylvania."

Don Block, Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council said, "It is encouraging to learn that the Governor wishes to include all literacy programs in the planning for the new workforce development system. We know with the merger of 168 federal programs, including adult education, JTPA, and vocational education, there is a need for adult educators to have a say in the planning of this system. With Federal law giving policy-making authority to state officials, we all must watch the planning process closely."

The letter states the Governor's belief that federal initiatives will "present a challenge to rethink and restructure workforce development" in Pennsylvania.

JoAnn Weinberger, Center for Literacy, Philadelphia, said, "I look forward to receiving an invitation to a public forum to discuss the future of workforce development in the Commonwealth. Adult basic and literacy education needs to be an integral part of a workforce development system since it represents an entrance point into education and job training. Furthermore, an integrated system does not currently exist. I hope this public forum will be the beginning of an ongoing dialogue among administration representatives, the providers, and the users, not just a single opportunity for input."❖

SENATOR SPECTER VISITS LEBANON ADULT ED CENTER

Senator Arlen Specter, U.S. Senator from Pennsylvania, recently visited the Adult Education Center in Lebanon, spoke with some adult learners, and received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE) for his support of federal legislation affecting adult basic and literacy education.

In addition to staff members of the IU #13 Center, other adult educators present included Jean Henry, PAACE Legislative co-chair, and David Dentler of the Center for Continuing Education at Bloomsburg University and PAACE first vice-president.❖

From the Bureau

GED EXAMINERS' CONFERENCE LOOKS TO EXAM'S FUTURE

by Larry Goodwin, State GED Administrator

The Harrisburg Ramada Inn on Market Square was the site of Pennsylvania's 1996 Annual GED Conference. More than 100 GED Examiners met March 14 and 15 and participated in a fast-paced series of discussions regarding issues important to the GED testing community. The program's themes of training and professional development were emphasized throughout the two-day event.

The conference agenda included presentations by members of the GED Testing Service staff, Pennsylvania adult educators, and a short "Town Meeting," which allowed all participants to discuss any GED-related issue of concern to them. The Testing Service team was led by Fred Edwards, Chief of Client Services and Assistant Director of the GED Testing Service. He discussed the rationale for raising the minimum GED score, which takes effect on January 1, 1997 (see THE BUZZ, November 1995), and the history of the "at risk" high school programs that have been ongoing in selected states since the mid-'80s. This team also made a presentation on the preparation for GED 2000. The changes, which have not been finalized, may include format redesign, new test items, and the first steps toward computer-supported testing. The GED 2000 will probably be implemented in the year 2002. Another presentation, "Marketing the GED," identified ways to promote GED testing in the community. The presentations were very informative and set the stage for the rest of the conference.

About 100 conference participants attended the dinner meeting on March 14. Guest speaker was Cheryl Keenan, Director of the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, Pennsylvania Department of Education. Ms. Keenan discussed the current adult education legislative and budget initiatives in Pennsylvania and Washington, as well as the quality initiatives that lead the Bureau of Adult Basic aid Literacy Education program agenda. Her remarks were in line with the professional development tone of the conference participants.

Friday's activities included presentations on the adult high school diploma program, which emphasizes course work and mastery of competencies, and the status of the ongoing Pennsylvania GED graduate survey. Both presentations generated a great deal of interest and a number of questions from participants.

The GED staff from the State Administrator's Office then conducted discussions covering security, special accommodations, and administrative and support issues. The final official business was a Town Meeting that allowed an unrestricted discussion of issues of concern to the examiners. A key concern voiced was the appearance of the Commonwealth Diploma, which is awarded to all GED candidates who attain a passing score. Most examiners agreed that the quality of the current diploma needs improvement. The Town Meeting was considered successful and will be included in future conference agendas.❖

ALTIN-PA LAUNCHES ADULT EDUCATORS INTO CYBERSPACE

by Tana Reiff, Project AXIS

Education at all levels is becoming more and more involved in accessing the Internet for educational purposes. ALTIN (Adult Literacy Technology Innovation Network) is a 1995-96 Section 353 project that is training adult basic and literacy educators throughout Pennsylvania how to use the emerging world of electronic networking.

ALTIN is led by Chris Hopey from NCAL (National Center on Adult Literacy) at the University of Pennsylvania. Eighteen individuals, two each from the state's nine Regional Staff Development Centers, attended intensive two-day training sessions in January and April in Harrisburg. At these workshops, they shared laptop computers and actual online connections for true hands-on learning. The wrap-up session is scheduled for May 29.

In between, participants have been completing a variety of independent and group activities to hone their skills and knowledge. These include learning their way around America Online, searching and surfing the World Wide Web, subscribing to online mailing lists and newsgroups, participating in realtime online chats, downloading shareware and freeware, exchanging e-mail, locating adult literacy resources on AOL and the Internet, and developing local technology plans. Some ALTIN participants have already gotten adult learners online as well, establishing "keypal" connections with other learners across the country.

At the April 2-3 workshop, participants authored their own World Wide Web homepages using HTML code (Web homepage programming language), and actually put up the pages on the Internet through America Online. They brainstormed an exciting range of possibilities for developing local and regional Web sites, including online databases, tutor placement, and online applications and referrals.

The next step for ALTIN "graduates" will be to train other adult educators to access and use Internet resources with their learners. "The goal of ALTIN-PA is to create a cadre of technology trainers and mentors within the Commonwealth to extend technology training to other literacy practitioners in Pennsylvania," says Hopey.

These trainers and mentors will then be able to provide both technical training, such as HTML, and organizational consulting for technology planning and fundraising."❖

LITERACY BEHIND PRISON WALLS

National Survey Shows Inmate Literacy Skills Are Low, But ...

Although the results of the National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS) and its accompanying Pennsylvania State Adult Literacy Survey have apparently had little impact on improving literacy services in the U.S., information from both surveys has been used by literacy providers to better understand the varied populations which ABLE programs serve. One of these is the prison population.

A special report by the Educational Testing Service, which conducted the NALS for the U.S. Department of Education, identifies a number of literacy characteristics of national prison populations. Some surprising news is that, despite lower average literacy skill proficiencies of prison populations as contrasted to the general population, the discrepancy is probably due to the larger percentage of minorities in the prison population rather than lower literacy skills of individuals. The survey found white, black, and Hispanic populations in or out of prison have about the same levels of literacy skills in the three areas measured by the NALS: prose, document, and quantitative literacy skills.

The report found that average literacy skill proficiencies of the prison population are "substantially lower" than those reported in the NALS. However, the minority population of prisons is nearly 65% contrasted to the general population minority of 24%.

Although the survey was not extensive enough to determine the impact of literacy skills on recidivism, the report noted the literacy proficiencies of repeat offenders do not differ from those of first-time offenders.

Education and vocation. Another finding was that 60% of the inmate population reported being involved in education and/or vocational programs in prison and that, generally, those participating only in vocational programs demonstrate higher literacy skills than those not involved in any programs, those involved in only education classes, and those in both education and vocational classes. Readers of the report were cautioned not to assume a cause-effect relationship from any of the survey's findings.

The survey found white, black, and Hispanic populations in or out of prison have about the same levels of literacy skills in the three areas measured by the NALS

Inmates also reported participating more frequently in literacy practices such as reading books and reading and writing letters than did persons in the general population surveyed for the NALS.

Literacy and work. Results of The National Adult Literacy Survey show individuals demonstrating lower levels of literacy are more likely to be out of the labor force. Since over two-thirds of inmates demonstrate performance in Levels 1 and 2, the "Literacy Behind Prison Walls" report concludes that unless inmates' skills can be improved considerably, "their prospects for being employed upon release from prison are diminished."

The report's Executive Summary states: "Given the results reported, literacy programs for inmates cannot afford to be shortchanged. Prisons should not be expected, however, to shoulder all the responsibility; individuals, groups, organizations, schools, colleges, and businesses need to reach behind prison walls with efforts aimed at improving the literacy skills of inmates. It will take a comprehensive strategy, the purpose of which should be to prepare the whole person for succeeding in the world beyond prison walls."❖

Our Readers Respond

RE: Multicultural Books About Families

Educational readings from four important categories are suggested in the article titled, "Multicultural Books About Families" (Buzz, November 1995). The article mentions: Families for Everyone ... African-American Families ... Asian Families ... and Latino Families. I was disheartened, however, to see that Gay and Lesbian Families were excluded from your "multicultural" list.

The silence and blindness to variations in human sexuality are one of the causes of discrimination, and the growing number of hate crimes in our society. Interestingly, the stigmatization of gay and lesbian individuals of all ages not only hurts those of different sexual orientation, but also hinders the development of heterosexuals as well. Teaching culturally constructed gender roles inhibits the free expression of *everyone's* individual self.

I would refer you to the literature that reports gay and lesbian identity is a natural developmental outcome (Marting, 1982; Remafedi, 1987; Remafedi and Blum, 1986; Rigg, 1982). For many, the silence, or worse the hidden life of socially induced shame, results in denied adolescence, and in an inordinate number of cases, suicide.

I have enclosed, for your review, a non-exhaustive ten-page list of Suggested Reading for Lesbian and Gay Youth and their Families that is distributed by PROJECT 10. I have also included an article, which I authored, that appeared in the spring, 1995 issue of *Adult Education Quarterly*.

For the sake of all families, I hope that the harmful omission of gay and lesbian information is not repeated in future numbers of What's the Buzz?.

Robert J. Hill
College of Education, Adult Education Program, Penn State, Harrisburg

52 BEST COPY AVAILABLE

HOW TO THINK ABOUT MATHEMATICS

Teacher Tip

Activities that can be used in either a pre-GED class or GED class should involve getting the students to look at problem solving in several different ways.

Different strategies should be discussed in large groups with a lot of guidance from the instructor. Many of the problem-solving strategies can include activities using manipulatives, using calculators for computation, drawing on personal experiences, making charts or graphs, and discussing alternative ways of finding the answers. Encourage students to *talk* about the problems and strategies. Let the students have *fun* solving the problems together. Provide opportunities for them to use multiple resources during the activity.

Ask the students to work individually on *The Storage Room*, below. Suggest that they use some of the strategies they had discussed. After approximately 20 minutes, ask them to compare answers with other students and share their problem-solving experiences.

The Storage Room. In the storage room there is enough space for 24 file cabinets. The room is filled with two-drawer and four-drawer file cabinets for a total of 70 drawers.

The Problem. How many two-drawer cabinets and how many four-drawer cabinets are in the storage room now?

Possible strategies:

1. **"Guess and Check":** Randomly guess. For instance, 12 (2 drawer) = 24 drawers; 12 (4-drawer) = 48 drawers. Total 72 (too many drawers).

Keep trying guesses until the correct answer is found.

2. **Relate to real-life experience:** If it was my storage room, I would most likely count them.

3. **Draw a picture or diagram:** All cabinets must have at least 2 drawers. Thus, 24 x 2 = 48. Then, add 2 more drawers to each cabinet until you get 70 drawers. 2+2 2+2 2+2 2+2 2+2 2+2, etc.

4. **Write an equation.** Let n = number of four-drawer cabinets. 24 - n = number of two-drawer cabinets. Then, 4n + 2 (24-n) = 70.

5. **Make a model or act it out:** Use small cubes or blocks to manually construct the problem.

Other strategies suggested by the author Jan Phillips, Assistant Professor at William Rainey Harper College, are:

- Use logic and arithmetic computation.
- Look for a pattern.
- Make a table or chart.
- Use a system of equations.
- Make an organized list.
- Work backwards (similar to Guess and Check). ❖

Excerpted from The Math Practitioner, *Winter, 1996, edited by Ellen McDevitt. For a copy of that issue or to subscribe, contact Ellen McDevitt at the Office of Community Education, Carlow College, 3333 Fifth Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15213 (412) 578-6683.*

Math Corner +%>x=

The Long and Short of Division

by Lynda Ginsburg
Director, Numeracy Project
National Center on Adult Literacy

Long division is a stumbling block for many learners. The task seems complicated and the procedure appears long, convoluted, and meaningless. Most learners, however, have little difficulty learning to find a quotient and remainder for beginning division exercises, such as $4\overline{)25}$.

Before moving to problems with larger divisors (the number outside the "box"), such as $23\overline{)75}$, consider spending time on short division, using problems with single-digit divisors and large dividends (the number inside the "box"), such as $4\overline{)3850}$.

In short division, working remainders are written right onto the problem itself, resulting in a series of simple division exercises.

For example, in the problem below, the quotient 9 is written above the 8, and the remainder, 2, is written before the next number in the dividend, making 25.

$$\begin{array}{r} 9 \\ 4\overline{)3^{2}850} \end{array}$$

Then, divide 4 into 25. Quotient 6 is written above the 5 and the remainder, 1, is written before the next number making 10, etc.

$$\begin{array}{r} 96 \\ 4\overline{)3^{2}8^{1}50} \end{array}$$

Of course, learners are mentally doing all the steps of the long division procedure. However, when they use short division, they perceive the steps in the process to be logically related and:

1. They remember what to do next.
2. They make fewer arithmetic errors that sidetrack the learning process.
3. They do not have to worry about aligning numbers correctly.
4. They write zeros in quotients when appropriate.

Once learners have mastered short division, it is easy to show them how to write down what they are doing mentally. Long division is, therefore, just a convenient notation system used for keeping track of numbers while dividing. ❖

ERRATA/ CORRECTIONS

◆ In the March 1996 Grammar Corner, example #5 dealing with fragments and run-ons should read: "The easy way out! Make two separate sentences, using a *period* and an uppercase letter."

◆ Also in the March issue, a correction to the PAACE legislative article. The $8.758 million for adult literacy in Governor Ridge's 1996-97 budget includes Act 143 and Pennsylvania Literacy Corps grants. The Progressive Readiness for Employment Program (PREP) is funded separately for $1.7 million. ❖

Newsletter Roundup

In which we note types and contents of professional newsletters to assist Buzz readers in finding their way through the adult education newsletter maze ...

➡ In the January/February 1996 ***The Ladder,*** from Push Literacy Action Now (PLAN) in Washington, DC, editor Tony Kroll asks about the possible source of "substantial" funds being used on the federal level "to propagate the endless stream of seemingly pointless research" in adult education and literacy. The article contends the funding of research studies with tenuous links to practice and implementation siphons off scarce monies which would be better spent delivering critical services to adult learners. *The Ladder* solicits adult educator input: 1528 Pennsylvania Ave. SE, Washington, DC 20003.

➡ Greetings to the ***Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*** and editor Norman Unrau. *JAAL* is the new name for the newsletter of the International Reading Association (IRA) and with the new name came the new editor. In the February/March 1996 issue *JAAL* features an article by Arlene Wartenberg, professor of education at Widener College in Chester, PA. The article outlines strategies for using literature in a whole-language classroom. The IRA is celebrating its 40th birthday as a preeminent organization dealing with reading and literacy issues. Its address is P.O. Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714-8139.

➡ The Winter 1996 issue of ***Developments,*** the newsletter for Washington State's adult basic and literacy education programs, features an article by a literacy coordinator who suggests a Statewide Assessment System would provide better coordinated, quality services for adult learners, along with program and state accountability for clients and services. A statewide Assessment Core Working Group is studying the concept.

➡ "ESL for African Americans" is an article in the February 1996 edition of *Nommo*. The article describes a program in Los Angeles which works with students who speak the African-American language. They help them acquire the ability to use mainstream American English while maintaining an appreciation for their home language and culture. *Nommo* is published by the Peoples Publishing Group, Inc., (800) 822-1080.

➡ Another article of interest to adult educators working with African-Americans is in the February 1996 edition of ***Literacy Update,*** published by the Literacy Assistance Center, 84 William St., 14th Fl., New York, NY 10038. LAC Staff Development Coordinator Emily Hacker describes some of the materials dealing with African-American History that are available for use in a literacy curriculum.

➡ "Two-thirds of the world's 885 million illiterate adults are women," says UNESCO, as quoted in Vol. 20 #1 of ***Literacy Advance,*** from Laubach Literacy Action. LLA is involved in a campaign begun in 1991 to meet the educational needs of 1.1 million women by the year 2000. The article notes that once women have the resources they need (empowerment, skills, information), they not only improve their own situation, but also the status of the entire family. Laubach Literacy International broadcast a documentary called "Hope is a Literate Woman" on PBS last September and again on April 26, 1996. Some of the regional staff development centers may have downlinked the broadcast. The address for LLA is Box 131, Syracuse, NY 13210.

➡ One of the more usable newsletters in our field is ***Hands-on English*** for teachers and tutors of ESL. It's full of classroom activities such as tools and techniques, group activities, crossword puzzles, etc. In Vol. V, #5 is a suggested activity, "ESL gangs," with adult learners role-playing using new vocabulary words, communication, etc. To subscribe write P.O. Box 256, Crete, NE 68333 .

➡ Another newsletter for ESL professionals is ***The Connector,*** a free, quarterly publication designed to "forge links between language and employment skills for adult immigrants." Contact Lucinda Branaman, Center for Applied Linguistics, 1118 22nd St. NW, Washington, DC 20037.

➡ In the March 1996 issue of ***Multicultural Messenger,*** Ramon Cortines, who is with the American Association of Higher Education's Education Trust, writes an article titled "How the Tough Get Going." He cautions educators to guard against the loss of momentum—the sense of hopelessness—that often accompanies cuts in programs and funding. "Over the past months, it's been very hard to avoid simply being overwhelmed by the tragedy being played out in Washington," he says. A subscription to ***The Messenger*** is available for $97. Call 1-800-822-1080.

➡ Videotapes and brochures dealing with everyday legal problems are available from the American Bar Association according to the Spring 1996 issue of ***Law Matters.*** Video topics include Problem Debt and Domestic Violence; brochures in English and Spanish deal with legal problems in Buying a Home, Child Custody, Job Discrimination and other topics. Write ABA, Publications Orders, P.O. Box 10892, Chicago, IL 60610-0892.❖

People and Programs

◆ Congratulations to **Ronald S. Pugsley,** who has been Acting Director for the **Division of Adult Education and Literacy** in the U.S. Department of Education, for being named Division Director. Ron is a good friend to ABLE in Pennsylvania and has participated in a number of Pennsylvania's Midwinter Conferences on Adult Education.

◆ Welcome to **Dr. Virginia Wells Smith** of Jim Thorpe, who was recently appointed Director of the **Carbon County Volunteers for Literacy**. She replaces Olivia Herman, who resigned in December. Dr. Smith recently retired after more than 33 years as a teacher and principal and, in addition to other community activities, teaches a course in multicultural sensitivity for the Carbon Lehigh IU. She says one of her first duties as Director will be to "meet with the public to spread the message and arrange to meet with organizations for financial support."

V.W. Smith

◆ What's 21 inches long and weighs 8 lbs., 3 oz.? The new"assistant coordinator" of the **Region 4 Staff Development Center** at the **Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council.** Katie Ann and mother/coordinator **Rachel Zilcosky** are doing fine.

◆ Congratulations to **Twila Evans**, who has been named Adult Literacy Staff Person of the Year at **Northampton Community College**, Bethlehem.

◆ Welcome to **Janice Maiatico,** new coordinator for the **Region 7 Staff Development Center** at Lehigh University. Janice is with the ESL Department at Lehigh.

◆ One of Pennsylvania's adult educators who has done quite a bit of serious research relating to the problem of retention in adult education programs is **Dr. Allan Quigley,** Associate Professor and Regional Director in Adult Education at the **Pennsylvania State University Center for Continuing and Graduate Education** at Monroeville. Dr. Quigley recently participated in a panel on adult student retention which was a broadcast to 12 states from Western Illinois University. In his closing comments Dr. Quigley was asked to give adult educators some advice for maintaining their program viability in the upcoming times of budget and service cutbacks. His advice was: "Have faith and the belief that what we're doing in adult education is worthwhile."

Allan Quigley

◆ The **Lutheran Social Mission Society/Lutheran Settlement House** of Philadelphia was one of 12 organizations nationally to receive a 1996 Women in Literacy/USA grant from Laubach Literacy Action designed to offer special services to previously unserved women. The $7,000+ grant will be used to support The Sheppard Neighborhood Women's Literacy Outreach Project.

◆ Congratulations to **Richard Torbert**, recently honored by **Mellon Bank** for 25 years of service. Richard and Mellon Bank PSFS are good friends to adult basic and literacy education in Pennsylvania. Mr. Torbert is a member of the Board of Directors of the Center for Literacy in Philadelphia, on the Board of the Pennsylvania State Coalition for Literacy, serves as co-chair of the PA 2000 Adult Literacy Task Force, and is remembered for his welcoming remarks at the May 1994 Conference, Call to Action: Mobilizing for Adult Literacy and Learning in Pennsylvania.

◆ Pennsylvania is fortunate in its large number of involved literacy volunteers (more than 7,000) with a rich variety of experiences. **Sherry Spencer,** Program Coordinator for the **Bradford-Wyoming County Literacy Council** in northeast Pennsylvania, tells us of four new volunteer tutors in her program: a retired state trooper, two substitute teachers, and a former Miss New Jersey.

◆ The **Scranton Council for Literacy Advance** (SCOLA) has been awarded Laubach Literacy Action's 1996 "National Award for Excellence for Outstanding Literacy Organization." SCOLA was recognized for the quality system of program management developed while implementing the Indica-

Schools Responsible for Some Education Beyond Age 21

The 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Philadelphia recently held that school districts which knowingly deprive disabled children of appropriate education must provide "additional and adequate training beyond age 21" for a period equal to the period of deprivation. The ruling also stated a "good faith" standard was incorrect and insufficient unless it provides "proper educational training." Adult educators are not sure what this precedent-setting ruling will mean to our programs, but there is a strong possibility that school districts might rely upon established adult education programs to provide the compensatory education called for by the Court.◆

People and Programs

tors of Program Quality. **Diana Statsman**, SCOLA Director, will receive the award at the LLA Biennial Conference in Portland, Oregon in June. Diana was also a presenter at the COABE Conference this month in Pittsburgh.

◆ Four members of the PAACE Board of Directors were sworn in recently as Commissioners of the newly formed Harrisburg Mayor's Commission for Literacy. Congratulations to **Cheryl Boyer, Temple University-Harrisburg; Cheryl Harmon,** adult literacy resource specialist with **AdvancE**; **Joan Leopold,** Education Director at **Harrisburg State Hospital** and Executive Director of **PAACE**; and **Jeff Woodyard,** Director of the **Opportunities Industrialization Center** (OIC) in Harrisburg.

◆ After reading of the phonics T-shirt in our January issue ("Hookt on Fonix rilly workt fer Mee!"), a Buzz reader sent us this one: "Bad Spellers of the World—Untie!"

◆ **Dr. Trenton Ferro,** co-editor of the prestigious *PAACE Journal of Lifelong Learning*, and Assistant Professor and Coordinator of Adult and Community Education at the **Indiana University of Pennsylvania**, has announced a new track in the master's degree program at IUP: Adult Education and Communications Technology.

◆ Where are Pennsylvania's adult educators going? As we brought our mailing list up-to-date for this issue of What's the Buzz? we counted up 38 address changes to other states, including to Indiana, Arizona, and Washington, DC,—all just since March. Why?

◆ **Dehra Shafer**, immediate past-president of the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE), received the Professional Service Award from Penn State's Continuing Education and Distance Education division for her work as PAACE President.

Dehra Shafer

◆ Congratulations to **Gail Leightley,** coordinator of **the Region 2 Staff Development Center** for initiating an "SCI Corrections Education Inservice Day" held in November at Danville. The Corrections Day involved adult educators from State Correction Institutions in RSDC regions 2, 3, and 7 in cooperation with PDE's Bureau of Correction Education and the Eastern Regional Area Support Team, which provides support for correction institutions in the area of learning disabilities. More than 60 adult educators from SCIs in the three regions attended. The large attendance was possible because the program was classified by the Correction Education Bureau as "inservice" rather than a "self-initiated" day for the SCI employees.

◆ Greetings to **Enza Jones,** placement counselor at the Harrisburg Area Community College, who was recently appointed Director of the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education Business and Industry Program Division and **Rhonda Dennis,** ESL Coordinator at Wilson College in Chambersburg, who was just appointed Director of the PAACE ESL Program Division.

◆ **TESOL** (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) has opened a "FAX on demand" service to provide professionals in the field with information about association activities. Callers can dial 1-800-329-4469 and request document #999, which is an index of available materials.

◆ Call them coalitions, consortiums, or collaborations: many groups of adult education programs in Pennsylvania are working together to provide collaborative services. One effective group, the **Montgomery County Literacy Network**, holds regular meetings of 20+ providers and distributed 5,000 copies of a brochure listing countywide services (printed on paper donated by a local paper company). Other outreach activities have included a corporate spelling bee hosted by several TV cable companies, Montgomery County Community College, and local businesses. **Janis Glusman,** Adult Literacy Coordinator for the **Montgomery County Retired and Senior Volunteer Program** (RSVP), tells us the Bee was a great success with business and corporation team cheering sections and a costumed "Buzz Bee" who popped balloons for misspelled words. (Just who *was* that Buzz Bee, anyway??)

◆ **Marlowe Froke** is a pioneer in distance learning in Pennsylvania and a strong advocate of adult education. He is a member of the PAACE Board of Directors, former PAACE President, 27th Annual Midwinter Conference Honorary Chair, former general manager of WPSX-TV and retired Associate Professor of Communications at Penn State. Presently Marlowe is serving as acting president of the **National Cable Television Center and Museum** as it completes its plans for relocation to Denver. ❖

Marlowe Froke

It's a Date!

MAY 1996

17 "Screening for Learning Disabilities in Correctional and Adult Settings": Teleconference, 12-2 p.m. Produced by the Correctional Education Association and the National Adult Literacy and Learning Disabilities Center. Contact your Regional Staff Development Center for downlinking information.

17-19 Adult Education Research Conference, University of South Florida, Tampa. Contact: Kathleen Hargiss, (813) 974-3455.

18 TESOL East Conference, University of Delaware. Contact: Ruth Jackson, 189 West Main St., University of Delaware, Newark, DE 19716-2588.

21 Fourth Annual Conference on Serving Adults with Learning Disabilities, Waterbury, CT. Contact: EASTCONN, 376 Hartford Turnpike, North Windham, CT 06256.

23 "How to Improve Your Organization's Image," Monroeville Holiday Inn: 12:30-4 p.m. Contact: PA Dept. of Community Affairs, (717) 787-5177.

24 "How to Improve Your Organization's Image," Best Western State College. Contact: PA Dept. of Community Affairs, (717) 787-5177.

26-29 1996 National Conference on the Adult Learner, Irving, TX. Contact: (803) 777-9944.

29-31 34th Annual Correctional Education Association Region I Conference, King of Prussia (the Millersville Correction Education Summer Institute will not be held in 1996). Contact: Correction Association of America, 4380 Forbes Blvd., Lanham, MD 20706.

31 Inter-regional 1996 Conference, Staff Development Center Regions 1 and 4; Holiday Inn, Hermitage, PA. Contact: RSDCs 1 and 4.

JUNE 1996

6 Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy (PSCAL) Forum, Harrisburg. Topic: "Family Literacy." Presentations by experts, panel, and discussion groups. Contact: PSCAL, 403 Herr St., Harrisburg, PA 17102, (717) 238-9026.

7 "Teaching the Learning Disabled in Correctional and Adult Settings": Teleconference, 12-2 p.m. Contact your Regional Staff Development Center for downlinking information.

12-13 LLA Pre-Conference Workshops

13-16 Laubach Literacy Action (LLA) 1996 Biennial Conference, Portland, OR. Contact: Janet Hiemstra, LLA 1320 Jamesville Ave., Box 131, Syracuse, NY 13210.

21-23 1996 TESOL Academy, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore. Contact: TESOL, 1600 Cameron St., Ste. 300, Alexandria, VA 22314.

25 Pennsylvania Rural Health Association Conference, Nittany Lion Inn, State College. Contact: PRHA, (717) 561-5325.

AUGUST 1996

2-3 Ninth Annual Adult Literacy and Technology Conference, Chicago. Contact: Illinois Secretary of State Literacy Office: 431 S. Fourth St., Springfield, IL 62701, or jgordon@library.sos.state.il.us.

SEPTEMBER 1996

25 NAASLN Pre-Conference: Discussion of issues of concern to adult educators.

26-28 1996 Conference of the National Association for Adults with Special Learning Needs (NAASLN), New Orleans. Call: (610) 525-8336.

Does Your Program Need a Solicitation Permit?

According to Nancy Woods, Director of the Literacy Program for Penn State's Beaver Campus, non-profit programs which solicit or receive funds from outside sources must have a Solicitation Permit, issued by the Pennsylvania Department of State. Nancy also brings to our attention some pending legislation which will have a significant impact upon fundraising in the future. For more information, contact her at (412) 773-7810.❖

Have a Good Summer!

This issue brings WHAT'S THE BUZZ? to an end for this year. Though we produced only five issues during 1995-96, we hope they were of interest and relevance to our 4,000+ adult-educator readers in Pennsylvania. We don't yet know if we'll be back in September, but hope each of you have a pleasurable summer and continue to enjoy your service to the adults in your programs. Thanks for reading THE BUZZ.

Dave Fluke, Editor

WHAT'S the Buzz?

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